

## Caring for your Ears



Without your ears you wouldn't hear anything so its important to look after them.

The best way to keep your ears healthy outside and in is to:

**Wash them every day.** Use a warm wash cloth to clean all around your ear.

**Never put anything smaller than your elbow in your ear.** This is very important. Never put cotton swabs or other things like fingers into your ears to clean them or get things out. You can easily hurt your ear.

**Protect them from very loud noises.** If you listen to loud noise over a long period of time, you can damage your hearing.

**Take care when swimming.** Avoid infections like swimmer's ear, which causes swelling and pain. First, be sure to dry your ears carefully when you get out of the water. If you've been in a lake, or other water that may contain bacteria, rinse them out with clean water.

*Remember, if you have any pain in your ear, have it checked out.*

Source: [www.kidshealth.org](http://www.kidshealth.org). Taking care of your ears. Sept 2001



### Clinic details

#### Family Chiropractic Clinic

In general, the colder the climate, the smaller the ears.

This is because ears give off heat.

In cold climates, it is better to conserve such heat rather than to release it so freely.

In general this rule applies to human cultures and also to other mammals.

You know those 2000 glands that secrete wax inside your ears? Medical research indicates that they secrete more when you're afraid.

### Did you know?

**The smallest bone in your body is in your ear.**

**The inner parts of your ear are deep inside your head just behind your eyes.**

**The cochlea inside your ear looks like a snail shell - but it isn't one!**

[www.suzy.co.nz/suzysworld](http://www.suzy.co.nz/suzysworld) Ears

### Inside

#### Ear Infections

**What does an adjustment feel like?**

**From the editor**

**Caring for your ears**

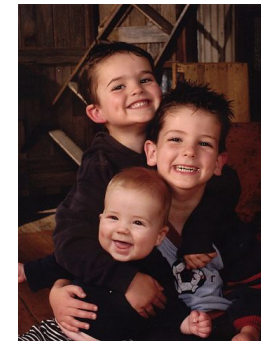
**Did you know?**

# Newsletter

Jan-Mar 2004

## Ear Infections

**I**f there are children in your household it is almost inevitable they (and the rest of the family) will have suffered from the pain of childhood ear infections. This is an extremely common and painful childhood health problem.



To understand why children suffer from middle ear infections it is important to know a little about how the ear works.

#### The Ear

The ear contains a tube called the Eustachian tube, a little duct that connects the middle ear to the back of the throat. The Eustachian tube has two purposes, firstly to provide drainage from the ear and secondly to allow air from the child's breathing to enter the middle ear.

#### Why Children Suffer

The principle reason why children suffer more frequently from ear infection than adults is due to the position of the developing Eustachian tube. In a small child the Eustachian tube is more horizontal than in an adult. For this reasons it may be difficult for fluid to drain from a child's ear. As the child grows the tube becomes more vertically aligned and drains more easily.

The function of the Eustachian tube is also under the control of various nerves and muscles whose nerve supply is linked to the upper part of the child's neck.

# Ear Infections

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## Common treatments

Antibiotics and intubation are common options offered to alleviate middle ear infection. There is growing evidence that while they may offer short term relief, they do not provide a satisfactory solution.

Repeated clinic research over the past 15-20 years on the use of antibiotics to manage middle ear infections has demonstrated they may not be the best initial approach. There are a number of reasons for this:

1. Up to 40% of childhood ear infections are not bacterial and therefore not treatable with antibiotics.

*...mechanical problems in the neck can have a marked effect upon the functional capacity of the Eustachian tube.*

2. Widespread use of antibiotics may lead to bacterial resistance, rendering the child susceptible to certain bacterial infections that will not respond to antibiotics.

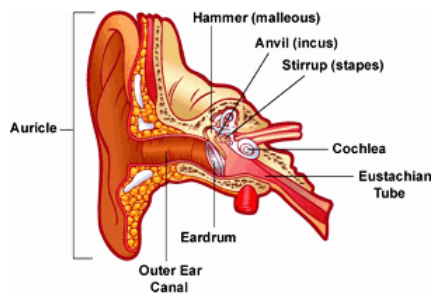
3. Studies have linked an increase in the incidence of allergic type problems to antibiotic use.

4. Benefit is often not as a result of the micro-organisms being destroyed, but simply because the antibiotics provide pain relief.

Another common practice to control ear infections is to insert tubes into the ear drum, a procedure known as tympanic intubation. This procedure provides immediate improvements in the child's hearing. However, clinical trials have shown it to last no longer than 6-9 months.

## Chiropractic

There is rising evidence to suggest that chiropractic adjustment may have a positive effect.



As the Eustachian tube nerves are connected to the neck muscles mechanical problems in the neck can have a marked effect upon the functional capacity of the Eustachian tube. For this reason it is important the spine is correctly aligned to ensure pressure is relieved from the nerve structures related to the Eustachian tube.

While the evidence from clinical trials is not yet definitive, it offers significant promise as an alternative treatment option. Evidence reported by researchers has shown the majority of children with middle ear infection are fully resolved within 10 days, many requiring only 1 or 2 chiropractic treatments. To this point in time, there has not been a single unwanted side effect as a result of a chiropractic adjustment.

# What does an adjustment feel like?

**How a child reacts to being adjusted will depend upon the individual child and their particular temperament. To some children it will be a wonderful game that is played with the chiropractor, while others may cry and become a little upset.**

The actual pressure of the adjustment is approximately 2 ounces per square centimeter, a force which can be tolerated very comfortably on the eyeball. The chiropractic adjustment in children is performed as either a sustained pressure on a particular body point or a very fast but light thrust, also over a specific body point.

If you have any concerns whatsoever regarding your child's adjustment or how they may feel afterwards, please contact your chiropractor. They can let you know if what your child is experiencing fits within the range of 'normal' feelings.



**The information in this newsletter does not replace informed chiropractic advice or care. You should not use this information to diagnose or treat any health problems without consulting your chiropractor.**

## From the Editor

Ear infections. The mere mention of the word gives me visions of sleepless nights and children crying in pain.

As a mother of two young children I have had my fair share of caring for children who have suffered middle ear infections. Knowing the best way to treat this is often confusing. There are so many options presented as the 'best treatment' it is difficult to know what is best for your child.

In all aspects of my children's health I am keen to ensure their bodies are given the best chance to develop into healthy adults.

It is good to know that chiropractic offers a natural way to ensure a child's body is in the best condition to cope with things such as ear infections.

Best of Health  
The Editor