

Marazion Surgery



Patient Information – Ear Irrigation

If you have been given an appointment for ear syringing you must read this leaflet before the appointment, sign the attached consent form and bring with you to the appointment.

Ear Wax is a normal body secretion, providing protection against infection and dust particles. The ear is self-cleaning, and wax works its way out naturally. **Wax is a natural secretion and if it is not a problem it is best left alone**

Never use cotton wool buds to clean inside your ears, they irritate the delicate skin inside the ear canal, also pushes wax back into the ear compacting it against the ear drum.

Visit a clinician who will advise whether wax removal is necessary and what type of procedure is most appropriate for you depending on your medical history

Ear irrigation is not risk free

It will only be carried out if the ear is completely blocked with wax, and this is soft. If any part of the ear drum is visible ear irrigation will not be performed.

Only **one** ear will be treated at a time.

Irrigation is **not** recommended within **2 weeks of flying**.

Ear irrigation is not routinely performed.

Ear irrigation can cause damage to the ear:

From infection, acute and chronic tinnitus (ringing in the ears), to possible perforation of the ear drum and deafness.

Ear irrigation is not suitable for everyone

It should **not** be used if you have:

- Previously had problems with irrigation, such as pain in your ear or severe vertigo.
- A perforated eardrum in the last year.
- A discharge of mucus from your ear, which may indicate an undiagnosed perforation in the last year.
- History of a middle ear infection in the last 6 weeks.
- Had ear surgery of ANY kind, including a grommet (a small, hollow tube surgically inserted into your ear if you have a build-up of fluid that causes hearing difficulties) in the last 18 months.
- Cleft palate (whether repaired or not).
- A severe external ear infection (acute otitis externa) with pain in the ear canal or pinna (the visible part of your ear) or (otitis media) in the past few weeks.

You should not have ear irrigation if the ear to be treated is your only hearing ear. This is because there is a small chance it could cause permanent hearing loss.

If you ever had surgery to your ears or had a perforated ear drum, you must tell us before the procedure.

To minimise risk of injury, the wax must be softened with ear drops for at **least three weeks**. Olive oil drops are well tolerated in most people. The drops should be used 2 to 3 times a day.

To put in drops, lie on one side with the affected ear uppermost.

Drop as much as possible of room temperature olive oil into the ear and leave in place for a few minutes.

You should remain lying on your side for 20 minutes.

Ear irrigation

An electronic ear irrigator is used; it involves a pressurised flow of warm water that removes the build-up of earwax. The irrigator has variable pressure control so that irrigation can be performed at the minimum pressure. A controlled flow of warm water will be squirted into your ear canal to flush out the earwax. Ear irrigation **should** be a painless procedure.

Tell the person who is treating you immediately if you have any:

- Pain
- Dizziness
- Hearing loss

Symptoms such as these may be a result of an ear infection and will need further investigation.

If ear irrigation is unsuccessful at removing earwax from your ear, we may recommend:

- Using eardrops again and returning for further irrigation.
- That you be referred to an ear, nose and throat (ENT) specialist to remove the earwax.

Other treatments

If your earwax cannot be removed using eardrops and ear irrigation, or you are unsuitable for these treatments, alternative options may be considered.

Agreement to Treatment

Statement of patient

I agree to have my ears irrigated & have read 'Patient information for Ear Irrigation' & understand the contraindications & accept the risks.

I confirm I do not have any of the conditions listed in the leaflet that would prevent me safely having ear irrigation.

I understand the person performing the procedure will have appropriate training & experience, and can refuse to irrigate my ear if not appropriate treatment.

Signature..... Date

Name (Print).....