

EAR INFECTION

Patient Information Sheet

Causes of ear infections

Ear infections can be caused by bacteria or viruses. Allergies and other environmental irritations can also cause ear infections.

Duration of common ear infection

Most symptoms will resolve within 7 to 8 days.

See a health care provider for:

- Temperature higher than 104° F;
- Discharge of blood or pus from ear;
- A child diagnosed with an ear infection whose symptoms do not improve in 2-3 days, or worsen; or
- Hearing loss.
- *If your child is younger than three months and has a fever over 100.4° F, call your provider right away.*

Treatment

Antibiotics have no effect on ear infections due to viruses. Even most bacterial infections will get better on their own. Your health care provider will consider several factors when determining if antibiotics are needed for you or your child.

How to feel better

Get plenty of rest;

- Drink plenty of fluids;
- Take acetaminophen, ibuprofen or naproxen to relieve pain or fever. (Check with your provider or pharmacist about which medications are safe for infants and children;)
- Put a warm moist cloth over the ear that hurts; and
- Avoid smoking, secondhand smoke and other air pollutants.



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