



Acute Otitis Media

Your child has been diagnosed or is suspected of having acute otitis media otherwise known as an ear infection and may be experiencing or demonstrating symptoms including:

- Pain or discomfort in or around the ear
- Repeatedly pulling, tugging, poking, rubbing or itching of the outer ear or ear canal
- Drainage of substances/liquids with varied colors and consistency from the ear canal
- Fever

Causes

- Ear Infections are a common illness in children. It happens when fluid and germs build up behind the eardrum, causing swelling and irritation. Kids may have ear pain, feel pressure, develop a fever, or have temporary trouble hearing.
- The only way to be sure of an ear infection is to examine the eardrum.
- Diagnosis and treatment can safely wait until morning if the earache begins after office hours.

Expected Course

- Often, there is no improvement the first day.
- Children gradually get better over 2-3 days.

If Diagnosed with an ear infection by your provider and prescribed an antibiotic

- Take your medication exactly as prescribed by your provider
- The antibiotic will kill the bacteria that are causing the ear infection.
- Give the antibiotic until the bottle is empty (or all pills are gone). (Reason: prevent the ear infection from flaring up again).

Care & Treatment

- **Fever Medicine:**
 - For fever above 102 F (39 C), give acetaminophen every 4 hours OR ibuprofen every 6 hours as needed. (See Dosage table)
- **Pain Medicine**
 - For ear pain, give acetaminophen every 4 hours OR ibuprofen every 6 hours as needed. (See Dosage table)
- Apply a cold pack or a cold wet washcloth to the outer ear for 20 minutes to reduce pain while medicine takes effect. Some children prefer local heat for 20 minutes.
- Your child can go outside and does not need to cover the ears.
- Swimming is generally not encouraged during an active ear infection
- Children with ear infections can travel safely by aircraft if they are taking antibiotics. Most will not have any increase in their ear pain while flying.

Medications:

Acetaminophen (Tylenol): ALL AGES	Infant/Children's Suspension Liquid 160mg/5mL	Junior Strength Chewable Tablet
Weight	Dose	Tablets
6 -11 lbs	¼ tsp or 1.25 mL	
12-17 lbs	½ tsp or 2.5 mL	
18-23 lbs	¾ tsp or 3.75 mL	
24-35 lbs	1 tsp or 5 mL	
36-47 lbs	1 ½ tsp or 7.5 mL	

48-59 lbs	2 tsp or 10 mL	2 tablets
60-71 lbs	2 ½ tsp or 12.5 mL	2 ½ tablets
72-95 lbs	3 tsp or 15 mL	3 tablets
>96 lbs		4 tablets

*Use weight to dose. One dose lasts 4-6 hours.

Ibuprofen (Motrin): > 6 MONTHS OF AGE	Infant Drops 50mg/1.25 mL (Ages 6 - 23 months)	Children's Suspension 100mg/5 mL (Ages 2- 11)	Children's Chewable Tablets 50mg	Junior Strength Chewable Tablets or Capsules 100mg
Weight	Dropperful	Dose	Tablets	Tablet or Capsule
12-17 lbs	1 = 1.25 mL			
18-23 lbs	1 ½ = 1.875 mL			
24-35 lbs		1 tsp or 5 mL	2 tablets	
36-47 lbs		1 ½ tsp or 7.5 mL	3 tablets	
48-59 lbs		2 tsp or 10 mL	4 tablets	2 tablets
60-71 lbs		2 ½ tsp or 12.5 mL	5 tablets	2 ½ tablets
71-95 lbs		3 tsp or 15 mL	6 tablets	3 tablets

*Use weight to dose. One dose lasts 6-8 hours.

Return to Childcare/School

- Your child can return to school or child care when feeling better and any fever is gone.
- Ear infections are not contagious.

When to Call

Continue Self-Care at Home

- Normal ear touching or pulling
- Itchy ear canal present < 3 days

Call Office to be Seen Within 24-72 Hours

- Ear pain or unexplained crying
- Yellow or green discharge
- Cloudy, white discharge
- Foul-smelling discharge
- Clear drainage > 24 hours
- Recent onset of awakening from sleep
- Signs of a cold
- Pulling at or rubbing ear continues > 3 days
- Behaving Similar to prior ear infection diagnosis

Call Office to be Urgently Seen

- Severe crying, screaming and/or fussiness
- Constant digging in 1 ear canal for > 2 hours
- Can't move neck normally
- Walking is unsteady and new-onset
- Fever > 105° F (40.6° C)
- Earache is SEVERE 2 hours after taking pain medicine
- Pink or red swelling on bone behind ear
- Outer ear is red, swollen and painful
- Pus or cloudy discharge from ear canal
- Pus on eyelids/eyelashes

- Child with cochlear implant

Go to ER now

- Fever and weak immune system (sickle cell disease, HIV, chemotherapy, organ transplant, adrenal insufficiency, chronic steroids, etc)