Cerumen Impaction

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What is cerumen? Cerumen impaction?

Cerumen is ear wax. Cerumen impaction is the buildup of ear wax causing a blockage in your ear canal.

What are the signs & symptoms of cerumen impaction?

Ear fullness, hearing loss, ringing in your ears, ear pain, dizziness

Causes?

Hearing aids or ear plug use, excessive cotton swab use, old age. Common in people with DS due to a tendency towards smaller, curved ear canals.

Images:

Ear Anatomy - http://www.medicinenet.com/ear_wax/article.htm
How is it diagnosed?
Your doctor can examine your ear using a medical instrument called an otoscope. He/she can assess for the buildup of wax using the otoscope.

Who is more prone to getting it?
Older adults, persons with a developmental disability, persons with frequent use of hearing aids and/or ear plugs.

Treatment Options

At home
You can use a solution called Carbamide Peroxide to soften the hardened wax and allow it to be easily removed from the outer ear with a cotton swab. Carbamide peroxide can be found in several over-the-counter ear drops.

Do not put any drops in your ear that have not been recommended by your health care provider if you have a hole (perforation) or a tube in your eardrum.

Other at-home options include: baby oil, almond oil, hydrogen peroxide

Treatment Options (cont.)

At the Doctor’s Office

Ear Lavage

Doctors can use a warm water solution or hydrogen peroxide solution to soften the cerumen and flush your ear canals.