## SELDEN MEDICAL CENTRE

**Managing earwax build up**

Earwax normally just falls out on its own. When it is blocking your ears you can treat this yourself or a pharmacist can help. The surgery is no longer offering an ear irrigation service.

**Do not use your fingers or objects like cotton buds to try to remove earwax as this will the make problem worse.**

## How to tell if your ear is blocked with earwax

You can have:

* earache
* difficulty hearing
* itchiness
* dizziness
* an ear infection
* sounds such as high-pitched tones coming from inside the ear [(tinnitus)](https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/Tinnitus/)

Once the earwax is removed, these symptoms usually improve.

**How you can treat earwax build-up yourself**

If you experience a build-up of earwax and your ears become blocked, treat using 2-3 drops of olive or almond oil twice a day for up to 2 weeks.

Over this period, lumps of earwax should fall out of your ear especially at night when you are lying down.

There is no evidence that ear candles or vacuums get rid of earwax.

**A pharmacist can help with earwax build up**

Speak to a pharmacist about earwax build up. They can give advice and suggest over the counter treatments.

They may recommend chemical drops to dissolve the earwax. The earwax should fall out on its own or dissolve after about a week.

If you have had a perforated eardrum, drops are not recommended.

**Preventing earwax build-up**

You can't prevent earwax. It's there to protect your ears from dirt and germs. But you can keep using ear drops to soften the wax. This will help it fall out on its own and should prevent blocked ears.

**If you have been treating ear wax with oil or drops for 2 weeks or more and you are still experiencing hearing problems, you may be referred for micro-suction. Please book an appointment with the Nurse to discuss. You MUST have been self-treating for at least 2 weeks before a referral can be made.**