



**Wrightington, Wigan and
Leigh Teaching Hospitals**
NHS Foundation Trust

Ear infections

Otitis Media (Middle Ear Problems)

Patient Information

Child Health Department

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What is it?

Otitis Media is an infection of the middle ear. There are two types:

1. **Acute Otitis Media** – what most people call an ear infection. This is linked with colds, and can be painful. It comes on over a few hours, and lasts a few days.
2. **Chronic Otitis Media** – also known as ‘glue ear’– is the build-up of thick glue-like fluid, over a period of time. It causes loss of hearing, but few other symptoms. Chronic otitis media is mainly found in school-age children, where there is an increased occurrence in winter and early spring, as it is linked with recurrent colds.

Acute Otitis Media

Symptoms include:

- Earache

- Fever
- Dizziness
- Temporary loss of hearing
- Headache
- Vomiting

Symptoms in babies include:

- Rubbing or pulling of ears
- Off feeds
- Diarrhoea (loose nappies)
- Decreased hearing
- Irritable/crying

How to care for a child/baby with Acute Otitis Media:

- Give regular paracetamol to ease any discomfort and also lower temperature.
- If antibiotics have been given by your doctor – continue to give these as instructed – finish the course.
- If the symptoms still persist, return to your doctor.

Chronic Otitis Media (Glue Ear)

Symptoms include:

- Loss of hearing

Treatment of Chronic Otitis Media:

Not all cases need treating. Improved drainage of the middle ear after the cold has gone may solve the problem (fluid drains down the “Eustachian tube” to the back of the mouth). If this problem persists, then an operation may be necessary, to help drain the fluid.

Please feel free to ask if you have any questions or queries which we have not covered in this leaflet. The staff will be pleased to answer your questions as clearly and honestly as they can.

Rainbow Ward, Telephone Number: 01942 778762 or 778763

Ward open 24 hours.

Please note that we can only give specific advice where we have recently been involved in the care of a child.

Comments, Compliments or Complaints

The Patient Relations/Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) Department provides confidential on-the-spot advice, information, and support to patients, relatives, friends, and carers.

Contact Us

Tel: 01942 822376 (Monday to Friday 9am to 4pm)

The Patient Relations/PALS Manager
Wrightington, Wigan and Leigh NHS Foundation Trust
Royal Albert Edward Infirmary
Wigan Lane
Wigan WN1 2NN

Ask 3 Questions

Become more involved in decisions about your healthcare. You may be asked to make choices about your treatment. To begin with, try to make sure you get the answers to three key questions:

1. What are my options?
2. What are the pros and cons of each option for me?

3. How do I get support to help me make a decision that is right for me?

How We Use Your Personal Information

For details on how we collect, use, and store the information we hold about you, please take a look at our “how we use your personal information” leaflet which can be found on the Trust website: www.wwl.nhs.uk/patient_information/Leaflets/default.aspx

This leaflet is also available in audio, large print, braille, and other languages upon request. For more information, please ask in department/ward.

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