

Deadly Ears

Helping little people
to hear, talk, learn and play

Healthy ears and strong hearing in early childhood

Strong hearing is very important in early childhood. Having strong hearing helps children to talk, listen, play and learn. Having good hearing is crucial to help the brain develop in the first five years of life.

What is middle ear disease?

Middle ear disease – also known as otitis media – is an infection or inflammation of the middle ear which can impact a child's hearing. It can start by a bacterial or viral infection which gets behind the eardrum by travelling up the tube connecting the back of the nose and the ear (Eustachian tube).

Much like the common cold, children can get this problem regularly.

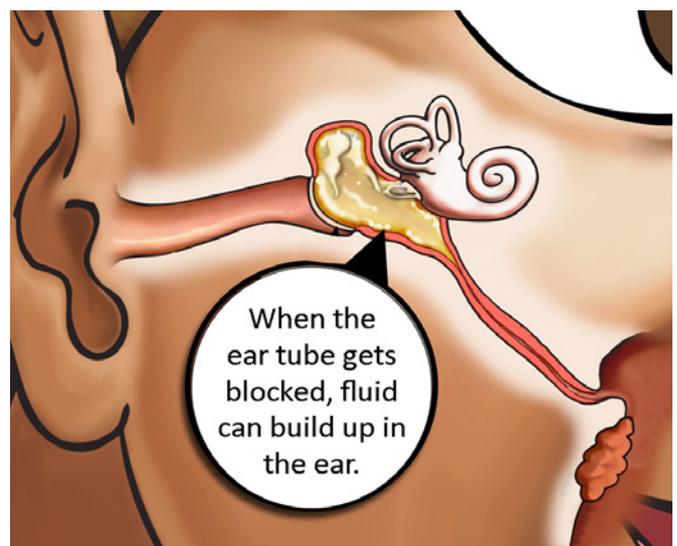
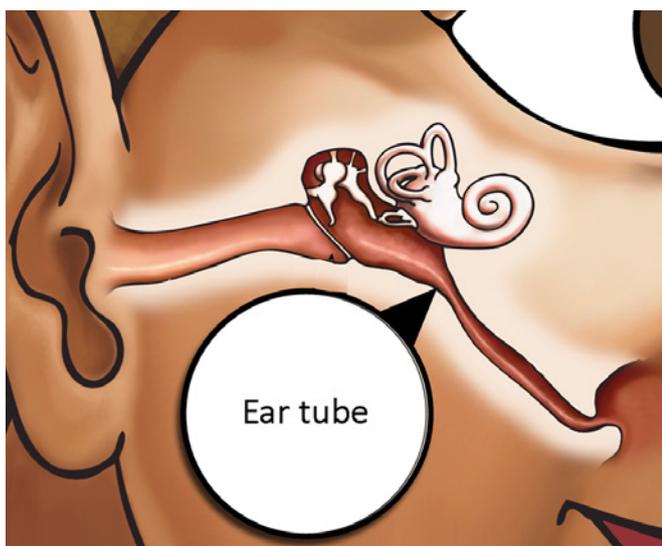
Most children experience middle ear disease at some stage during early childhood. In most cases, the condition requires limited/no medical intervention, but it is important to get children's ears checked.

Signs and symptoms of middle ear disease

Some signs might include the child:

- pulling at their ears.
- having a fever.
- complaining of ear pain.
- discharge coming from the ear.
- feeling dizzy or displaying clumsiness.
- showing signs of a cold.
- being unusually grizzly and grumpy.

Sometimes the child may show no obvious signs.



Contact us

✉ PO Box 5492, West End QLD 4101
 t 07 3310 7709 or 13HEALTH (13 43 25 84)
 w www.childrens.health.qld.gov.au/deadly-ears
 f www.facebook.com/DeadlyEars #DeadlyEars

How does it affect children?

Long term middle ear disease and hearing loss can affect childhood development, including speech, language and learning. This can make it difficult for children to learn to talk, play with others, say words clearly, listen to others and learn new things. In some severe cases the disease can lead to permanent hearing loss. This can lead to long-term developmental, behavioural and learning problems.

What to do

1. If you are worried about a child's ears or hearing talk to their parent and/or carer. To help with the conversation, you could use the Deadly Ears bookmark which can be found in the resources section of our website: www.childrens.health.qld.gov.au/deadly-ears-resources
2. Encourage the child's parent and/or carer to take them to a local health centre to have their ears checked.



How to keep ears healthy

- Encourage children to wash their hands and faces regularly.
- Ensure children eat plenty of fruit and vegetables.
- Encourage parents and carers to make sure children get all their vaccinations.
- Get children to blow their nose, then wash their hands.
- Breastfeeding helps babies fight disease, encourage parents if they can, to do so for as long as possible.
- Avoid smoking cigarettes around children.



For further information please visit our Facebook page or website (see below).



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