

How can I treat my child's ear infection?



Five out of six children experience ear infection before the age of 3.

Two common types of ear infections:

Otitis externa ("swimmer's ear")

Usually occurs after **swimming in fresh water lakes** or **chlorinated swimming pools**. It affects the outer-ear canal and is caused by a **bacterial infection**.

Otitis media

This **middle-ear infection** occurs behind the eardrum and is **caused by viruses or bacteria**. Your child might experience a **fever**.

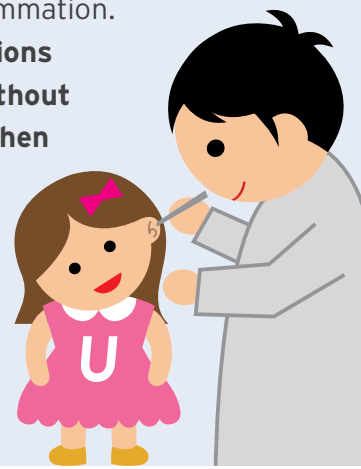
Signs and symptoms:

- Moderate to severe ear pain
- Fever
- Irritability
- Dizziness
- Nausea and vomiting
- Fluid leaking from the ear
- Hearing difficulties in affected ear

Diagnosis and treatment

Your physician will examine the ear for evidence of fluid or inflammation.

Many middle-ear infections are viral and resolve without treatment. Acetaminophen or ibuprofen can be used **for pain and fever control**. For infections that turn into bacterial infections, antibiotics may be prescribed.



Preventive care

Children should **wash their hands and faces** frequently and avoid contact with people exhibiting viral symptoms.



Exercise and a balanced diet will also provide nutrients the body needs to protect itself.

