

Ear Infections & Children



Caring for Kids!

When fluid becomes trapped in the inner ear it causes an ear infection. This can happen after a cold, flu, or respiratory infection. Many children have ear infections more than once, and fluid can stay in your child's ear for 2-3 months after the infection.

Prevention

- Breastfeed your child when they are a baby.
- Don't smoke around your child.
- Hold your baby at an angle instead of horizontally when you breastfeed or bottle feed.
- Stay up to date on recommended vaccinations for you and your child.
- Wash your hands and have your child wash their hands frequently.
- Wean your child off their pacifier by 6 months of age.

Symptoms

Children may be more at risk for ear infections if they:

- Attend daycare regularly.
- Exposed to parental cigarette smoke. ***Talk to your care team about how to quit smoking.***
- Have had previous ear infections or have a family history of ear infections.
- Have frequent colds and/or other illnesses.
- Have nasal-sounding speech.
- Take a bottle to bed and use a pacifier after 6 months of age.
- Were born prematurely or with a low birth weight.

Not all children have the same symptoms. Look for a combination of the following symptoms:

- Behavioral problems, irritability, or fussiness.
- Had a fever or cold within the last week.
- Inability to sleep.
- Pain in the ear or a ringing sensation.
- Pulling on the ear.
- Trouble balancing or feeling dizzy.
- Trouble speaking, hearing, or paying attention.

Treatment

- A warm, not hot, heating pad held over the ear can help relieve the earache.
- Talk to your healthcare provider about which medicines you should use to relieve symptoms.
- Your healthcare provider may prescribe an antibiotic.