Otitis Media, or middle ear infection, is caused by a variety of infections. Symptoms include pain, fever, drainage, and sometimes hearing loss.

Diagnosis of ear infection is made by physical examination of your ears and a description of symptoms. If antibiotics are prescribed, be sure to take all of the medicine as instructed.

To make you more comfortable, use a heating pad on a low setting and take acetaminophen (Tylenol®). Never give aspirin to a child under 18 years of age. It could possibly lead to Reyes Syndrome, which can be fatal.

To help prevent further infection, do not put anything in the ears including cotton tipped applicators, because they can push wax back into the ear canal, causing wax buildup. The wax blocks the ear canal making it hard to see the ear drum, leading to decreased hearing and infections.

**Precautions**

- If pain, fever, drainage, and / or increase in hearing loss occurs, call or visit your primary care doctor or return to the Emergency Department if you do not have a doctor.
- Be sure to follow-up as recommended by the doctor.

If you would like more written information, please call the Library for Health Information at (614)293-3707. You can also make the request by e-mail: health-info@osu.edu.

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Emergency Department
The Ohio State University Medical Center
- Upon request all patient education handouts are available in other formats for people with special hearing, vision and language needs, call (614) 293-3191.