

## THE MARLOW MEDICAL GROUP

### Ear Syringing – What you need to know

We do not carry out routine ear syringing (also known as ear irrigation) as the potential dangers of having your ears syringed include the following; ear infections, perforated ear drum and tinnitus. These risks mean ear syringing is no longer a routine practice.

#### What is ear wax

Earwax is produced inside your ears to keep them clean and free of germs. It usually passes out of the ears harmlessly, but sometimes too much can build up and block the ears.

Ear syringing is not suitable for everyone and should probably not be used if any of the following apply to you:

- You have a current or have a **perforated ear drum** in the past
- A **discharge** from the ear unlike wax
- Have a **grommet**
- Had any **ear surgery** within the last 18 months
- Have or had a repaired **cleft palate**
- Have an **ear infection** with a **painful ear canal**
- The ear to be syringed **is your only hearing ear** as damage during syringing could cause permanent deafness
- **Young uncooperative children**
- You suffer from **tinnitus**

Ear Wax needs to be removed only if:

- The hospital audiology department has requested removal for the fitting of hearing aids
- Or the Doctor or Nurse requires a clearer view of your eardrum due to hearing loss or other medical reasons.

What to do if you think your ears are blocked with wax:

Don't try to remove a build-up of earwax yourself with your fingers, a cotton bud or any other object. This can damage your ear and push the wax further down.

A build-up of earwax is a common problem and the best method used to clear troublesome ear wax is to use olive oil. You will require a dropper for administering this effectively (available from the Pharmacy). Ear drops should always be used at room temperature. Apply a dropper full into the affected ear and lie on your side for about 5 minutes with the affected ear facing upwards. This allows the drops to soak into the wax and soften it. Repeat 4 times a day for 14 days. Alternatively you can try over-the-counter preparations from your pharmacist such as Otex Express Combi which contains drops and a bulb syringe for removal.

Speak to your Pharmacist about the most suitable product for you and make sure you read the leaflet that comes with it.

When to make an appointment with the Nurse:

If after following this advice symptoms persist, you should make an appointment to see the Nurse who will make an assessment to see whether syringing is necessary. But please note **if you have not treated with olive oil for 14 days (and the Nurse will be able to tell) your ears will not be syringed.**

Some private local services also offer ear syringing.

For further details on how to treat ear wax, please go to [www.marlowdoctos.co.uk](http://www.marlowdoctos.co.uk) and refer to our services page.