



MIDDLEBORO PEDIATRICS

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PREVENTION OF SWIMMER'S EAR

Swimming is a great way for kids to stay active, especially during the summer months. However, the combination of heat, humidity and water can lead to an ear condition called acute otitis externa, more commonly known as swimmer's ear.

The infection often is caused by bacteria being carried into the outer ear canal. Symptoms of swimmer's ear include redness, swelling, itching, drainage of pus and pain.

The following are some tips from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to prevent and treat swimmer's ear:

- Keep your ears as dry as possible.
- Use a bathing cap, ear plugs or custom-fitted swim molds when swimming to keep water out of ears.
- Dry your ears thoroughly after swimming or showering.
- Use a towel to dry your ears well.
- Tilt your head and hold each ear facing down to allow water to escape the ear canal.
- Pull your earlobe in different directions while the ear is faced down to help water drain out.
- Don't put objects, including cotton-tip swabs, pencils, paperclips or fingers, in the ear canal.
- Don't try to remove ear wax. It helps protect your ear canal from infection.
- If you think the ear canal is blocked by ear wax, consult your pediatrician rather than trying to remove it yourself.

To prevent Swimmer's Ear you can make you own preventive ear drops.

- Mix equal parts of white vinegar and rubbing alcohol. Place the mixture in a medicine bottle with a medicine dropper.
- Place a few drops of the solution in each ear after swimming.
- Drops should not be used by people with ear tubes, damaged ear drums, outer ear infection, or ear drainage (pus or liquid coming from the ear).

Call our office if your child's ears are swollen or painful, or has drainage from his/her ears.