General Information about Otic (Ear) Medicines

The name of your medication is ________________.

About Your Medicine

OTIC (EAr) DROPS are used in the ear to treat irritation, inflammation, or infection. Some ear medicines are used to treat an infection. Others will not cure the infection itself but will relieve the pain, swelling, and redness of the infection. Some ear drops are also used to help soften ear wax so it can be removed more easily.

The precautions and side effects vary for specific ear medicines. Make sure you know what the precautions and side effects are for the one you are using.

Before Using This Medicine

Some ear medicines may be absorbed into the body; therefore, tell your doctor, nurse, and pharmacist if you:

- are allergic to any medicine, either prescription or nonprescription (OTC);
- are pregnant or intend to become pregnant while using this medicine;
- are breast-feeding;
- are using any other prescription or nonprescription (OTC) medicine, especially other ear medicine;
- have any other medical problems.

Proper Use of This Medicine

- USE EAR DROPS ONLY AS DIRECTED. Do not use more ear drops and do not use more often than your doctor ordered.
- Use this medicine only in your ear.
- The bottle may not be full; this is to provide proper drop control.

- You may warm the ear drops to body temperature by holding the bottle in your hand for a few minutes before using them. However, if the medicine gets too warm, it may break down and not work as well.
- To prevent contamination of the ear drops, do not touch the applicator tip to any surface (including the ear).

How to Use this Medicine

- Wash hands before and after using the medicine.
- Lie down or tilt the head sideways so that the ear into which the medicine is to be placed faces up.
- To straighten the ear canal:
  - FOR ADULTS, gently pull the earlobe up and back.
  - FOR CHILDREN, gently pull the earlobe down and back.
- Drop the prescribed number of drops into the ear canal.
- Keep the ear facing up for several minutes to allow medicine to run to the bottom of the ear canal.
- A clean, soft cotton plug may be gently inserted into the ear opening to prevent the medicine from leaking out.
DO NOT RINSE DROPPER AFTER USE. Wipe the tip of the dropper with a clean tissue and keep the container tightly closed.

For patients using ear drops for an ear infection:

- **KEEP USING THE MEDICINE FOR THE FULL TIME OF TREATMENT even though your symptoms may have disappeared. This will help clear up your infection completely.**

For patients using ear drops to help remove ear wax:

- The ear should be flushed with warm water after you have used the medicine for 2 or 3 days. Make sure that you know how to do this. If you have any questions about how to flush the ear with water, check with your doctor.
- Ear drops used to help remove ear wax may cause discomfort, short term hearing loss, dizziness and skin irritation.
- Patients who have an open middle ear air space due to previous surgery, perforated ear drum or ear tubes should not use drops to help remove ear wax.
- If you have an active ear infection, do not use drops to help remove ear wax. **IF YOU MISS A DOSE OF THIS MEDICINE, use it as soon as possible. However, if it is almost time for your next dose, skip the missed dose, and go back to your regular dosing schedule.**

Precautions while Using This Medicine

**If your ear condition does not improve within a few days or if it becomes worse, check with your doctor.**

Do not use any leftover medicine for future ear problems without first checking with your doctor. Some ear medicines should not be used on certain kinds of bacterial, viral, or fungal infections.

Possible Side Effects of this Medicine

**SIDE EFFECTS THAT SHOULD BE REPORTED TO YOUR DOCTOR:**

- Ringing in the ears, dizziness
- Burning, itching, redness, skin rash, swelling, or other signs of irritation not present before use of this medicine

SIDE EFFECTS ARE SPECIFIC FOR EACH EAR MEDICINE. Ask your doctor, nurse, or pharmacist what the side effects are for the medicine you are using.
More information from UWHC:

“how to” properly use ear drops

Straightening the ear canal.