



## How Best to Use Ear Drops

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### Background

- If possible get someone to put the drops in the ear canal for you
- Lie down with the affected ear up
- Once the drops are in place, stay in this position for 3-5 minutes. Use a timer to help measure the time. It is important to allow adequate time for the drops to penetrate into the ear canal.
- A gentle to-and-fro movement of the ear will sometimes help in getting the drops to their intended destination. An alternate method is to press with an in/out movement on the small piece of cartilage (tragus) in front of the ear.
- You may then get up and resume your normal activities. Wipe off any excess drops.
- Keeping the ear dry is generally a good idea while using eardrops
- Try not to clean the ear yourself as the ear is very tender and you could possibly damage the ear canal or even eardrum
- If the drops do not easily run into the ear canal you may need to have the ear canal cleaned by your clinician or have a wick placed in the ear canal to help in getting the drops into the ear canal
- If you do have a wick placed, it may fall out on its own. This is a good sign as it means the inflammation is clearing and the infection subsiding.
- Do not remove the wick yourself unless instructed to do so

Source: Clinical Practice Guideline: Acute Otitis Externa. Rosenfeld RM, Schwartz SR, Cannon CR, Roland PS, Simon GR, Kumar KA, Huang WW, Haskell HW, Robertson PJ. Otolaryngol Head Neck Surg. 2014 Feb; Vol. 150(1S) S1-S24. doi: 10.1177/0194599813517083