

Cerumen or Earwax

Cerumen or earwax is healthy in normal amounts and protects the skin of the ear canal from infection. In a majority of individuals, the ears are self-cleaning and there is no need to use Q-tips or other instruments. If one does experience ear blockage or fullness, options include using over the counter treatments such as baby oil, sweet oil, hydrogen peroxide, and other over the counter therapies to soften wax.

If over the counter therapies are unsuccessful, an option is to have manual removal, under the care of a physician. If individuals have had prior ear surgery, an Ear, Nose, Throat (ENT) physician may have to evaluate the ear and meticulously remove earwax buildup. Various instruments to remove earwax, even from individuals with narrow ear canals, are utilized in the office with magnification from a microscope.

Other popular therapies such as ear candling to remove ear wax are not recommended, even by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA), due to risk of damage to the outer, middle, and/or inner ear.