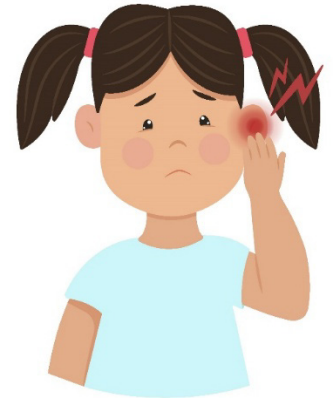


Ear Infection in Children (Acute Otitis Media)



What Is an Ear Infection or “Acute Otitis Media”?

- An ear infection is also called acute otitis media.
- Ear infections are most common in young children.
- Ear infections can cause fever, ear pain, poor sleep, irritability, and sometimes ear drainage.

What Should I Do To Help My Child Feel Better?

- Medicines like acetaminophen (commonly called Tylenol®) or ibuprofen (commonly called Advil® or Motrin®) can help with ear pain and fever; follow the instructions on the package based on your child’s age. Store brands are just as good as name brands.
- Avoid applying extreme heat or cold to the ear or putting any smoothing liquids in the ear as these can cause injury.

When Will My Child Feel Better?

- If a clinician determined that your child may have acute otitis media, your child should feel better within 3 days. It may take 1–2 days more to improve without antibiotics.
- Antibiotics can have side effects like diarrhea or rashes and make future ear infections harder to treat; a clinician weighs the risks and benefits of antibiotics when deciding if they make sense for your child.

When Should I Contact My Clinician?

- Seek medical attention if your child’s symptoms worsen or fail to demonstrate any improvement within 48–72 hours, regardless of whether antibiotics were prescribed or not.
- Seek immediate medical care if your child has a temperature ≥ 102 degrees Fahrenheit, is becoming confused, lethargic, develops persistent vomiting, is increasingly tired, or is ill appearing.
- If you notice that one ear is suddenly sticking out or there is redness behind one of the ears, you should seek immediate medical care for your child.

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