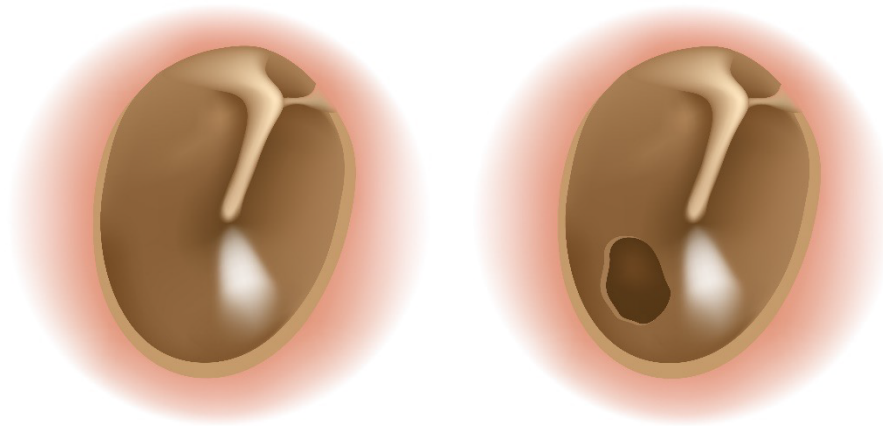


How to care for your child with a Perforated (Ruptured) Eardrum

This leaflet will provide you with information on perforated (Ruptured) eardrum definition, causes, symptoms, diagnosis, home care tips and when to seek medical advice.



Normal eardrum

Ruptured eardrum

What is a perforated eardrum?

A perforated eardrum is a hole in the membrane (the tissue of the eardrum) that separates your ear canal from your middle ear.

What are the causes of perforated eardrums?

- **Middle ear infection** can result in the accumulation of fluids in your middle ear, which can cause the eardrum to tear up.
- **Barotrauma (a sudden uncomfortable feeling where your child feels their ears are blocked)** air pressure changes associated with air travel, scuba diving and the impact of a car airbag can cause Barotrauma
- **Loud sounds or blasts** can rarely cause a tear in your eardrum
- **Foreign objects** in your ear can puncture the eardrum
- **Head injury**

What are the symptoms of perforated eardrums?

- Ear pain that worsens before suddenly getting better
- Discharge from ear
- Hearing loss
- Ringing in your ear
- Spinning sensation
- Nausea or vomiting that can result from spinning sensation

How is perforated eardrum diagnosed?

The doctor will ask a few detailed questions about your child's health and examine your child's ear using a small handheld torch.

How is a perforated eardrum treated?

- Perforated eardrums usually heal without treatment within a few weeks
- You may get antibiotic drops if there is signs of infection
- If the hole in your eardrum doesn't heal by itself, treatment may include procedures to close the hole by an ENT (Ear Nose and Throat) specialist
- If follow up is needed, arrangement will be made, and you will be contacted for a follow up appointment in the ENT specialist clinic

Home care advice

- **Keep your child's ear dry.** Place a waterproof silicone earplug or cotton ball coated with petroleum jelly in your ear when showering or bathing.
- **Refrain from cleaning your ears,** so it gets time to heal.
- **Avoid blowing the nose.** The pressure created can damage your healing eardrum.
- **Hold a warm piece of cloth** against the ear to help reduce any pain
- **If your doctor advises giving medicine, you can give**
 - Paracetamol (any brand) or Ibuprofen (any brand)
 - Follow the instruction on the medicine package for the correct dose for your child
 - Do not give your child Aspirin as this can cause serious complications

When should I seek medical advice?

- Mild to moderate pain
- Bloody or pus-filled discharge leaking from the ear
- Nausea, vomiting, or consistent dizziness
- Ringing in the ears
- Hearing loss

Go to the Emergency Department if your child:

- Has severe pain in the ear
- Has swelling behind the ear
- Has difficulty in breathing
- Is unable to drink any liquids
- Appears dry and produces less urine
- Has Something in the ear