

# SWIMMER'S EAR

Swimmer's ear or Otitis Externa is an infection of the ear canal. Most commonly this type of ear infection is caused by water that gets into the ear canal, and then the skin within the canal becomes inflamed, painful, and infected. Children are more likely to get infections from pools than from lakes.

## Symptoms

- Painful and itchy ear
- Pain when there is movement of ear
- Pain with touch of the area in front of the ear
- Plugged ear
- Ear discharge/ drainage

## Treatment

Once the doctor has determined your child has swimmers ear they will usually treat with ear drops. It is important to use the drops as directed. Tylenol® or Motrin® may be used for pain control. Usually symptoms will start to improve in 3 days. It is important to use the drops for 48 hours after symptoms are resolved. You should not swim when you have an outer ear infection.

## Prevention

After swimming you should always dry your ears well. Shake your head to get as much water out as possible. Do not use Q-tips. Q-tips may cause irritation to ear canal and increase the risk of an infection.

## Complications

On some occasions it may be necessary to treat outer ear infections with oral antibiotics. If fever should occur, your child needs to be reevaluated. Other complications that require reevaluation include any swelling of the ear or the area around the ear, or increase pain.