Step 3
Use ear drops properly, if prescribed

1. Clean out the ear canal by dry mopping.
2. Keep the ear facing upwards.
3. Gently pull the earlobe backwards and upwards (backwards and downwards in case of young children).
4. Drop 2 or 3 ear drops into the ear canal.
5. Move the pinna to make sure the ear drops go in.
6. Put in 2 or 3 more ear drops.
7. Push the tragus a few times.
8. Keep the ear facing upwards for 5 minutes.

© World Health Organization 2023. Some rights reserved. This work is available under the CC BY-NC-SA 3.0 IGO licence.
WHO/UCN/NCD/SDR 23.3
https://www.who.int/health-topics/hearing-loss#tab=tab_1
What causes ear discharge?

Ear discharge can be caused by infection which is

- In the ear canal
- Behind the ear drum

Is ear infection serious?

Ear infections can be serious and if untreated can lead to:

- Hearing loss
- Hole in the ear drum
- Swelling behind the ear
- Infection in the brain
- Paralysis of the face
- Dizziness

Can ear infection be treated?

Yes. Ear infections can be treated with medicines or surgery.

How should I care for a discharging ear?

Seek and follow the advice of a health worker or doctor

Care for a discharging ear by following three steps

**Step 1**
Protect the ear from water when bathing/showering

- Soak a piece of cotton with oil

- Squeeze

- Plug it into the ear canal
  - Don’t push it deep inside

- Remove after bathing/showering

**Step 2**
Clean the ear with a wick

- Take a piece of soft, strong tissue paper

- Roll it into a pointed shape

- Gently pull the pinna away from the head

- Place the wick into the ear canal

- Leave it in for a minute to absorb any discharge

- Remove the wet wick and inspect it

- If there is discharge on it replace with a clean wick

Remember

Repeat until the wick stays dry