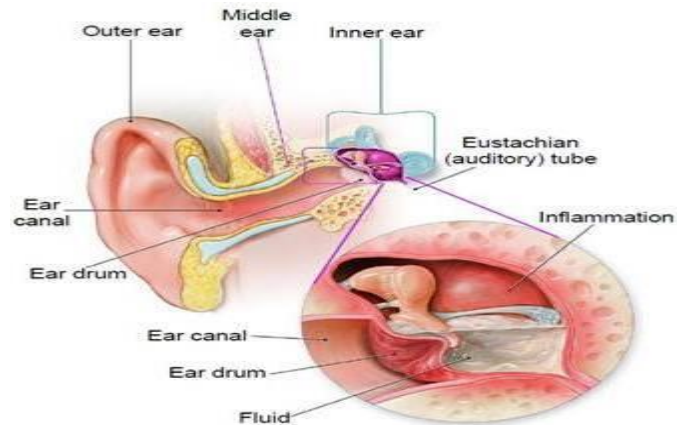


## Earaches

**What is an Ear Infection?** Ear infections come in various types. Acute otitis media is a middle ear infection, while otitis media with effusion involves fluid buildup in the middle ear without infection or associated symptoms like fever, ear pain, or pus.

"Swimmer's ear" refers to an infection of the outer ear canal, distinct from a middle ear infection. Middle ear infections can be caused by bacteria such as *Streptococcus pneumoniae* and *Haemophilus influenzae* (nontypeable), along with viruses responsible for colds or flu.



### Symptoms

Common signs of a middle ear infection in children include ear pain, fever, fussiness, ear tugging, and sleep disturbances.

**When to Seek Medical Attention:** Consult a doctor if you are experiencing a fever of 102.2°F (39°C) or higher, discharge from the ear, worsening symptoms, or if symptoms persist beyond 2-3 days. Additionally, hearing loss warrants medical evaluation.

**Diagnosis:** Our medical professional at The Doctor Edges, guided by symptoms and physical examination, diagnoses the type of ear infection. By examining the eardrum, the doctor can confirm a middle ear infection and assess the presence of pus.

### Self-Care Guidelines

- Rest
- Increased fluid intake
- Pain or fever relief with acetaminophen or ibuprofen (ensure appropriate dosage for children)

### Preventive measures can help reduce the risk of ear infections:

- Maintain up-to-date vaccinations, including the annual flu vaccine and pneumococcal vaccine to guard against *Streptococcus pneumoniae*.
- Practice good hand hygiene.
- Opt for exclusive breastfeeding until the baby reaches 6 months, continuing for at least 12 months.
- Avoid smoking and exposure to secondhand smoke.