

CERUMEN/IMPACTED EAR

Level II (No Level I)

Skill Level: RN

Definition: Cerumen is a secretory product of water from the ceruminous glands and oil from the sebaceous glands. Ears may become impacted.

MODERATE	
<p>Subjective:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• My ear feels plugged.• I've been having trouble hearing lately.• May have mild ear discomfort.	<p>Assessment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Alteration in comfort.• Potential for hearing loss.• Cerumen impacted ear/Ear irrigation
<p>Objective:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• No erythema or drainage.• Possible discomfort when external ear manipulated.• Tympanic membrane not visible due to cerumen (yellow to dark brown in color) and may occlude ear canal.	<p>Plan: At nursing discretion may use any or all of below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Irrigate ear canal with warm water.• Debrox 5 gtts BID x 3 days, then recheck. If canal is still occluded, irrigate ear canal with warm water.• May recheck in 24 hours if canal becomes irritated.

Nursing Education:

1. Some cerumen is normal and has antibacterial properties
 - Ascertain that patient does not have a perforated tympanic membrane, after treatment examine ear.
 - Canal may become mildly erythematous with irrigations. Do not treat for infection if mild redness is present up to 2-3 days after irrigation.

Patient Teaching:

1. Keep foreign objects out of ear canal.
2. Use a washcloth and warm water in the shower.
3. While shampooing hair, to soften wax, let water gently run into ear.

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APPROVED:

Medical Services Manager

Date

Chief Medical Officer

Date



Medical Director

5/5/09

Date

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