

Information for patients, families and carers

Ear Micro-Inspection and Toilet

Who is this information for:

This information is for patients, families and carers of patients with any form of debris in the external ear canal requiring precise removal during their consultation with a MEG ENT surgeon, or Audiologist.

What is it:

Ear toilet is a minor 'cleaning' procedure that your surgeon may perform during your consultation, using a microscope or magnification headlight, and some form of cleaning device.

It is performed on one or both of your ears.

Increasingly, this procedure is also performed by audiologists, your GP, and specialty ear toilet clinics.

Ear toilet is a very common part of an ENT consultation, and usually takes little more than 5 minutes.

Reasons You might need Ear Toilet:

- i) To help the surgeon completely evaluate your ear, sometimes wax or other debris has to be removed.
- ii) To help eliminate causes reduced hearing, sometimes hard wax that is completely blocking off the ear canal has to be removed.
- iii) To help resolve ear infection, infectious discharge, bacteria or fungal elements, and other debris needs repeated removal.
- iv) To remove a foreign body in the ear canal.

How is it performed?

Generally you are seated in a chair, sometimes semi-reclined in a procedure bed.

You ENT surgeon will approach your ear from one side, and may insert a small funnel to help her see better.

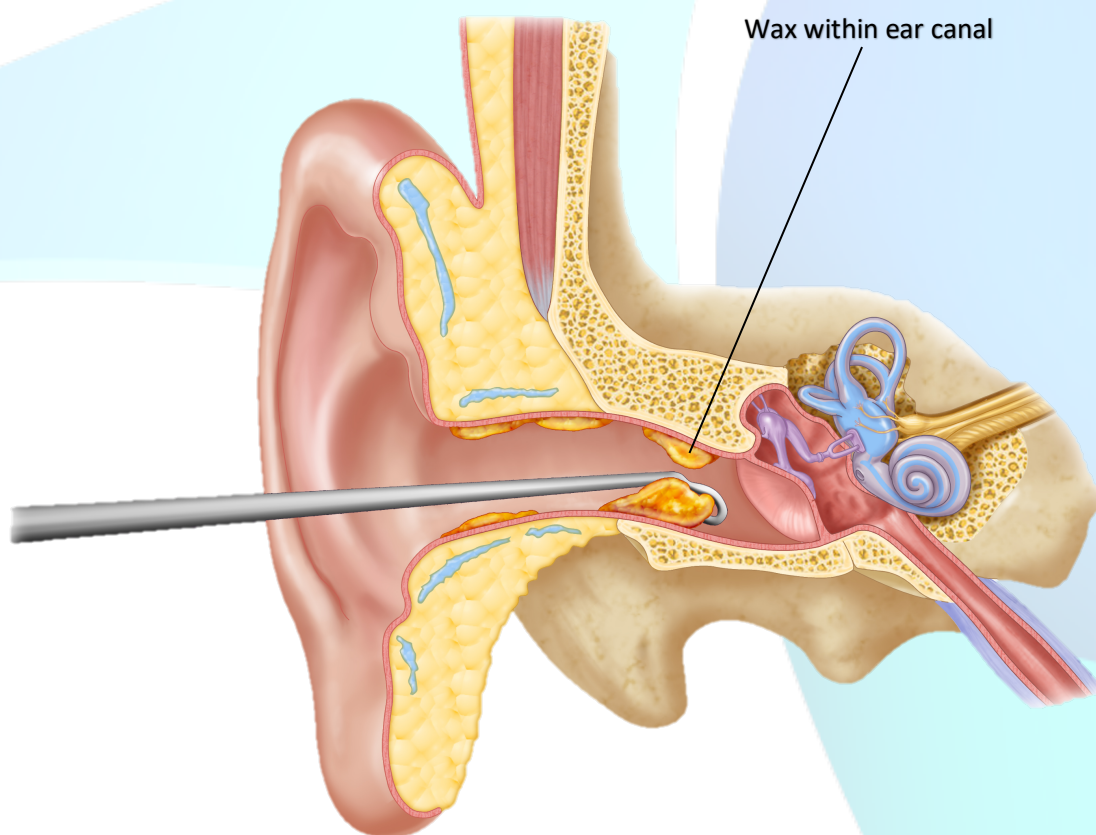
Information for patients, families and carers

Under direct vision, optimally with a microscope or magnification headlight, the ear canal will be inspected and then any debris will be removed using small sweeping motions, moving from the outside of the ear canal, down towards the ear drum.

Generally your surgeon will ask you to remain as still as possible, to minimise the chance of discomfort or injury.

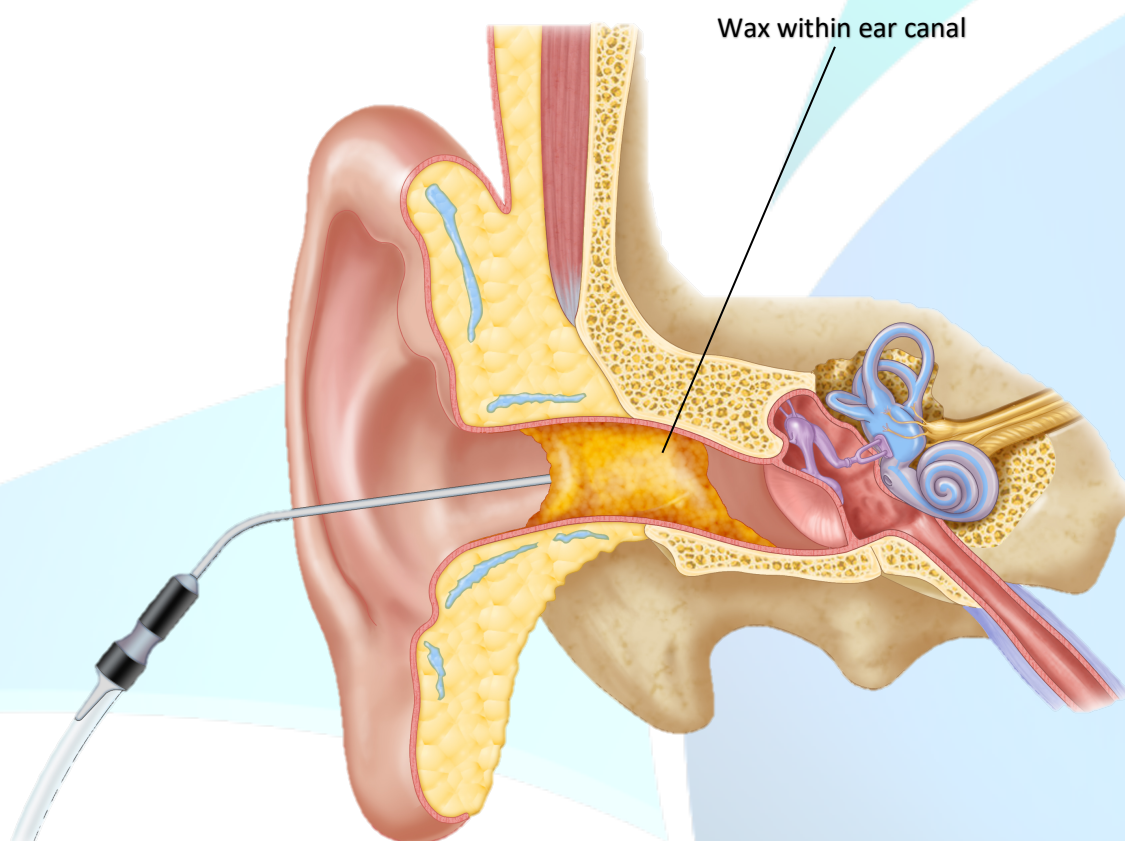
This can be achieved with:

- i) A small cotton whisp
- ii) A **Wax curette** or blunt hook



Information for patients, families and carers

- iii) A suction device or **small vacuum**



What will I experience:

The most common aspect of this part of the procedure is some minor discomfort on contact with the ear canal.

If a suction device is used, it can be moderately noisy, and may cause minor short-lived dizziness. Once any significant debris is removed, you will often feel relief, and possibly an immediate increase in hearing.

Information for patients, families and carers

What are the risks:

It is very unlikely that ear toilet causes any local injury, though it is rarely possible – some minor bleeding may occur.

When a vacuum technique is used, the rushing cool air can sometimes induce some transient dizziness, which quickly resolves once the suction is complete.

What are the benefits:

Generally the procedure is brief and very effective in removing debris, helping to resolve infections, and allowing your surgeon/clinician to completely evaluate your ear canal.

Are there any alternatives:

Occasionally, your surgeon/clinician may ask you to use softening/cleansing ear drops before or instead of your ear toilet procedure, such as Hydrogen Peroxide Ear drops, or Waxsol[®]

Further Information

You can contact your ENT Specialist at the Melbourne ENT Group (MEG):

- Phone: 1300- 952-808
- Email: admin@melbentgroup.com.au
- Website: www.melbentgroup.com.au



Your GP is also the best contact for ongoing care and concerns.