

Practical C

Washout of the ear: EXPLAIN, DEMONSTRATE, SUPERVISE

Introduction

Washout of the ear can be used to clear wax or a foreign body from the ear canal. It can also clear pus from the ear in patients with a hole in the ear drum (tympanic perforation) that is infected.

Equipment

Clean water (boiled if necessary)

20ml syringe

Kidney dish or other bowl

Tissues

Optional:

Iodine solution (e.g. 10% povidone-iodine) can be mixed with water

PROCEDURE



1. Wash your hands



2. First examine the ear (practical B).



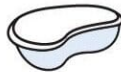
3. Make the irrigation solution. Water should be slightly warmed to make sure it is neither too cold nor too warm. Ideal temperature is 37C which is the same as body temperature.



4. Fill the syringe with water. If using Iodine, draw up 1ml of povidone iodine with 19ml of water.



5. Place the tip of the syringe into the ear canal. Point the syringe so it is facing towards the top of the ear canal.



6. Ask the patient to hold the kidney dish or other bowl under the ear and tight against the skin of the neck



7. Push the irrigation solution into the ear canal. The solution will drain into the bowl, and may contain wax, foreign body or pus.



8. Repeat washout until there is only clear solution coming out, and no more wax or pus.



9. Examine the ear again with otoscopy. Repeat washout if needed.

10. If the ear canal is still very wet, dry mopping (practical E, module 4) can be used to dry it

NOTES



Avoid ear washout if the person:

- complains of ear pain
- has a dry hole in the eardrum
- has had recent surgery in that ear
- has been diagnosed with acute otitis