

Ear Wax

Just as the skin sloughs off on areas that you can see, it also sheds inside the ear. For people with ichthyosis, who shed more than the normal amount of skin, the skin shed inside the ear canal can combine with wax and form a solid material. This solid material may itch or smell and may cause a reduction in hearing. Never attempt to remove this solid material yourself. Have your, or your child's, hearing checked regularly, and discuss ways to keep the ear free from build-up from the shedding skin. Your physician may recommend an earwax remover that is sold over the counter. Never stick anything in your or your child's ears; this can puncture the eardrum and cause hearing loss.

Some of our members have found products and strategies that work for them. **Please check with your doctor before using any of these products:**

- *Bausch & Lomb Ear Wax Remover Kit.* Contains 6.5% Carbamide Peroxide solution to soften earwax and a bulb syringe to irrigate the ear canal. Available in local pharmacies and drug stores.
- Liquid *Colace*, a mild stool softener, can be as effective as earwax remover products. Reference: *Ceruminolytic effects of docusate sodium: A randomized, controlled clinical trial.* Singer, AJ, Sauris, E., and Viccellio, AW. *Annals of Emergency Medicine* 2000; 36:228-32. Please contact Moureen in the national office for a copy of this research study to share with your physician.
- *Debrox Drops, Ear Wax Removal Aid.* 6.5% Carbamide Peroxide drops. Available in local pharmacies and drug stores.
- *Ear- Wiz®.* A flexible plastic loop with a safety stop that allows you to remove excess wax with the loop without touching the eardrum. Available in local pharmacies or drug stores.
- *Ototek Loop.* A flexible plastic loop, designed by an ear surgeon, with an ear guard to prevent the tip from hitting the ear drum. (This device has a narrower tip than the Ear-Wiz.) Call toll free, 1-877-874-3929, or www.ototekloop.com.

This information is provided as a service to patients and parents of patients who have ichthyosis. It is not intended to supplement appropriate medical care, but instead to complement that care with guidance in practical issues facing patients and parents. Neither FIRST, its Board of Directors, Medical & Scientific Advisory Board, Board of Medical Editors, nor Foundation staff and officials endorse any treatments or products reported here. All issues pertaining to the care of patients with ichthyosis should be discussed with a dermatologist experienced in the treatment of their skin disorder.



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Improve lives and seek cures for those affected by ichthyosis and related skin types.

January 2021