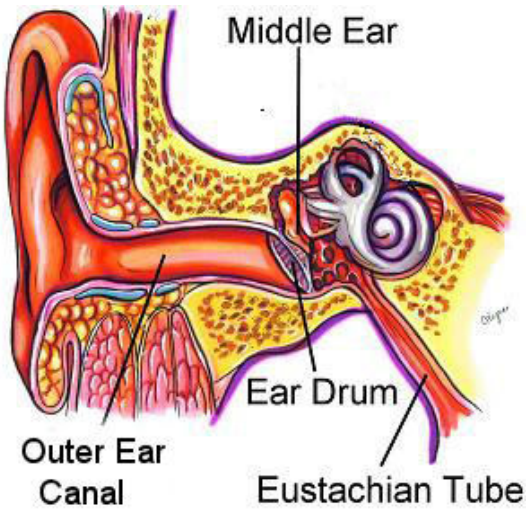
Eardrum Perforation

The eardrum *(tympanic membrane)* is a thin; round tissue inside the ear that separates the ear canal from the middle ear. This is the tissue that detects sound and enables you to hear. The eardrum can be punctured or torn (*perforated*) by sudden pressure changes, intrusion of foreign objects, and accidental injury from cleaning. Eardrums generally heal without help and with little or no permanent hearing loss.



HOME CARE INSTRUCTIONS

- Keep your ear dry as this improves healing. Swimming, diving, and showers are not allowed until healing is complete. While bathing, protect the ear by placing a piece of cotton covered with petroleum jelly in the outer ear canal.
- Only take over-the-counter or prescription medicines for pain, discomfort, or fever as directed by your caregiver.
- Blow your nose *gently*. Forceful blowing increases the pressure in the middle ear and may cause further injury or delay healing.
- Resume normal activities (showering, etc.) when the perforation has healed. Your caregiver can let you know when this has occurred.
- Air travel is allowable with a perforated eardrum. It generally will not cause any pain or problems.
- Diving is not allowable while the drum is perforated.
- If your caregiver has given you a follow-up appointment, it is very important to keep that appointment. Not keeping the appointment could result in a chronic or permanent injury, pain, hearing loss and disability. If there is any problem keeping the appointment, you must call back to this facility for assistance.

SEEK IMMEDIATE MEDICAL CARE IF:

- There is bleeding or pus-like *(purulent)* material coming from your ear.
- You have problems with balance, feel dizzy, or feel sick to your stomach *(nausea)* and vomiting.
- You develop increased pain and/or an oral temperature above 102° F (38.9° C) or as your caregiver suggests, which is not controlled by medications.

MAKE SURE YOU:

- Understand these instructions.
- Will watch your condition.
- Will get help right away if you are not doing well or get worse.

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