

Treatment and giving medicines Te whāngai i ngā rongōā

Earache is painful. Your doctor or nurse will tell you what medicine is best to ease the pain if your child is distressed.

- If you are giving your child medicine for pain relief paracetamol is safe and effective. Always follow the directions carefully.



Never give more medicine than the directions tell you to.

Giving antibiotics

Not all earaches need antibiotics. Your doctor will tell you which treatment is best.

Ears usually stop hurting before the infection is properly better.

- Give the medicine exactly as the doctor or chemist tells you.
- Every day give just the amount you have been told.
- Keep giving your child the medicine until it is finished.
- When all the medicine is finished take your child (or baby) back to the doctor or child health nurse. Only a doctor or nurse can tell if the infection has properly cleared.
- If the doctor has given your child an antibiotic, you should notice some improvement after two days. The ear infection should be getting better and the pain should be less. If there is no sign of improvement after two days, go back to your doctor. The doctor may want to try a different antibiotic.

Preventing ear infections

Te ārai i ngā mate taringa

- ☺ **Take your child for Well Child checks.**
- ☺ **Breastfeed if you can.**
- ☺ **Keep your home and car smokefree.**
Stop smoking if you can or smoke outside.
- ☺ **To reduce the risk of asthma and allergies:**
 - keep your house dust free
 - keep rooms warm and dry
 - keep animals out of bedrooms.
- ☺ **Never bottle feed a baby lying down flat.**
Hold baby nearly upright when bottle feeding. Ear infections can be caused by the formula flowing into the middle ear through the eustachian tubes, if the baby is lying flat.

Further information

Information about glue ear and the insertion of grommets as treatment for glue ear can be found in the Ministry of Health pamphlet 'Glue Ear - Taringa Hoi' Code HE1414.



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Earache Te Taringa Ngau



*What causes earache?
He aha te pūtake o te taringa ngau?*

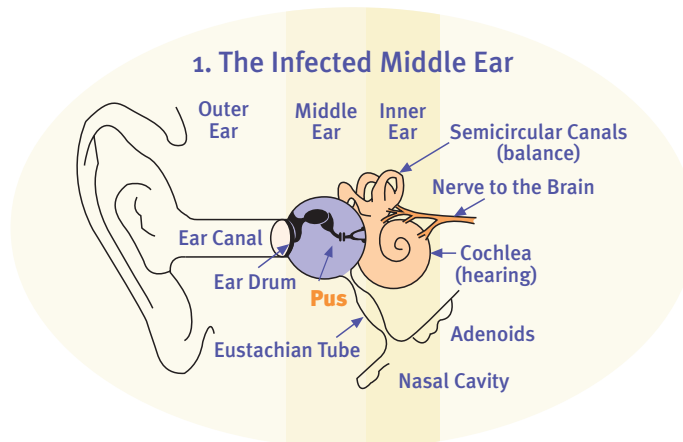
- Earache occurs when a cold or infection spreads up the small tubes that connect the ear to the back of the nose and throat.
- The tubes become blocked and the infection spreads into the middle ear.
- The eardrum bulges out and becomes red and painful.



*Earache can be serious
I ētahi wa, he mate
taumaha te taringa ngau*

Earache is painful.

It can cause hearing loss and in rare cases may lead to infection of the bone around the ear.



*How can I tell if my child has earache?
Me pēhea au e mōhio ai he
taringa ngau tō taku tamaiti?*

Earache may cause your baby to:

- cry or grizzle more than usual
- keep touching an ear again and again
- have a discharge from the ear, sometimes called a *runny* ear or a *leaking* ear.

Some babies may have a cold as well as earache.

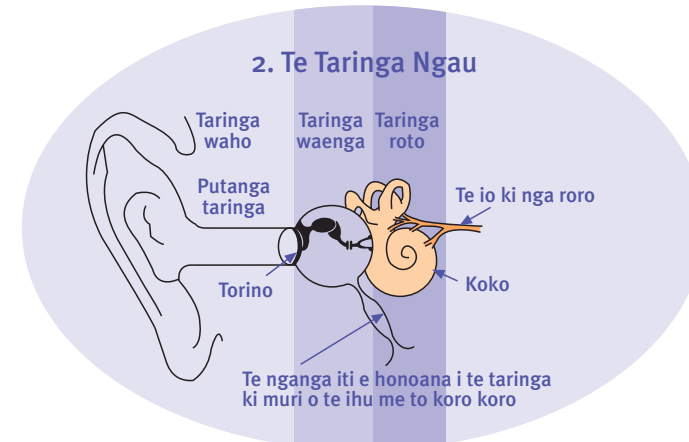
An older child may complain about a sore ear. When your child has any of these signs, it may be earache. If a hug, clean nappies or some food do not settle your baby it may be earache. **You know what your child is usually like.** If you think your child has earache talk it over with your doctor or nurse straight away.

Do not use cotton buds to clean baby's ears.

Never poke anything into a child's ear. The eardrum can be easily damaged.

*Take action
Whakatikahia, mahia*

- If you think your baby has earache take your baby to the doctor right away.
- At night or in the weekend call your duty doctor.



*A discharge or 'runny' ear
He rukenga, he taringa kea rānei*

- If the child's ear is '*runny*' or discharging, the ear infection has caused the eardrum to burst.
- The infected fluid (pus) in the middle ear causes pressure on the sore eardrum, which can be very painful. When the eardrum bursts, the infected fluid can then leak out of the ear. If this happens the pressure is relieved, and the pain is gone, so the child may seem to be much better. However the infection will still be present.
- The child still needs to see a doctor to have the infection treated and make sure the eardrum heals properly.

