

Ear Discharge can be “THREATENING”

What causes Ear Discharge?

Most of the complaints related to the ear like deafness, tinnitus, discharge or pain in the ear are all inter-related. Most dangerous among all is discharge from the ear. When a child is born, the mother feeds her baby in a lying down posture, the milk travels from the throat through a tube called **Eustachian Tube** to the middle portion of the ear behind the ear drum and becomes a source of infection.

Infection in the nose or throat i.e. Adenoids and tonsils, can secondarily cause ear discharge. Swimming in dirty water can be a source of ear discharge. Slap over the ear or bursting of crackers near the ear are all causes leading to ear discharge.

Fluid in the middle ear is a very common cause of deafness especially in children. If proper treatment is not taken this fluid gets infected and pressure inside the ear drum increases ultimately leading to rupture of the ear drum. This leads to formation of a permanent perforation or hole in the ear drum. When the hole in the ear drum is near the wall, infection reaches behind the ear into the mastoid bone. From here it can travel via blood vessels into the brain and can head to brain abscess, meningitis, nerve paralysis etc. this can cause swelling in the brain, paralysis of the nerves of the face, dizziness & deafness and may lead to death.

Treatment Options

If adenoids & tonsils are the source of infection then by surgery adenoids and tonsils are removed. The perforation or hole in the ear drum can be closed by Microscopic Ear Surgery – **Tympanoplasty**. In this surgery skin near the ear is used to form a new ear drum. When the mastoid bone is also affected then Mastoid Surgery is done. Micro Ear Surgery has developed into an excellent mode of treatment. It is a day

care surgery meaning, the patient has to stay in the hospital for only 12 hours, it is done under local anesthesia, so is painless, hardly few drops of blood is lost and in some cases can be done without any external incision, so no visible scar marks are seen.

Is ear discharge normal?

Most of the people think discharge from the ear or nose is normal, but it is not so in both condition care has to be taken, more so for the ear. One should immediately consult an ear nose throat surgeon for proper advice and treatment.

Article By - **Dr. Rohit Mehrotra, MS (ENT)**
E-mail: rohitmehrotra@vsnl.net

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