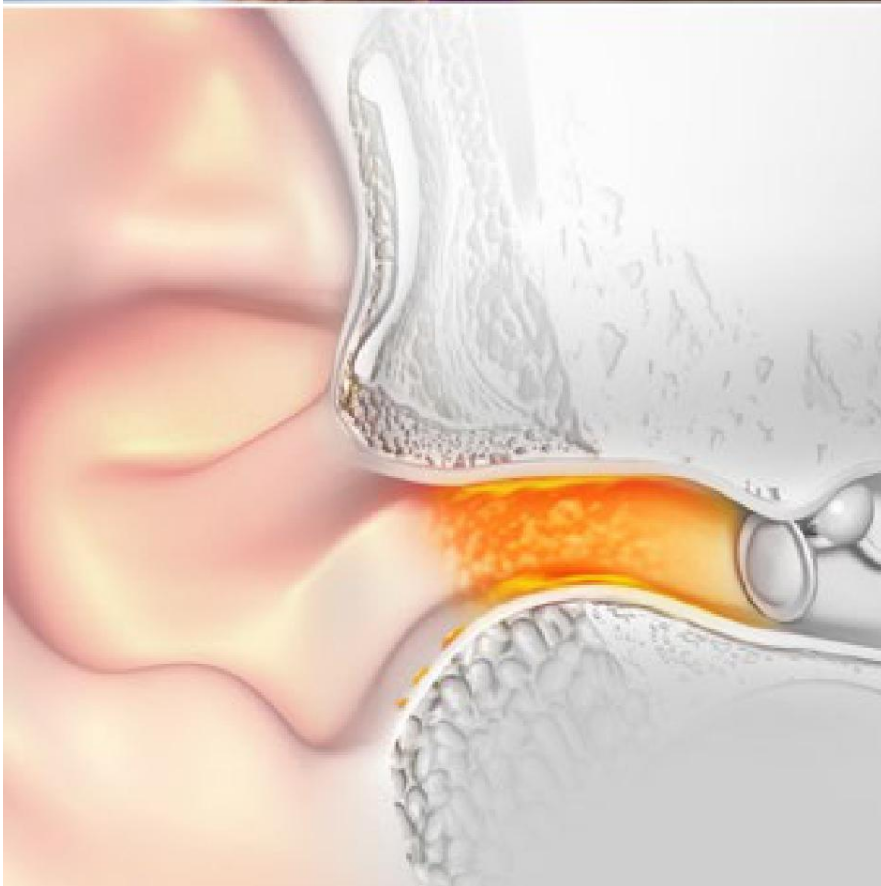




Ear Wax



Overview

We all have ear wax. It's natural and healthy. But what is it, exactly? Why do we have it, and what does ear wax do for our ears? Let's take a moment to learn about it.

What is it?

The proper name for ear wax is "cerumen." It's a waxy oil made by glands in your ear canal. It coats the skin of the ear canal. It hardens as it dries, and over time it will fall out of your ear. What does ear wax do? Well, it has two important jobs. First, it traps germs, dust and small objects and keeps them from getting deeper into your ear canal, where they could cause damage. And second, it coats and protects the skin of the ear canal so this skin won't be irritated by water.

What should you do about it?

So, what should you do about your ear wax? Most people don't have to do anything. Your ear canals are self-cleaning, and the wax will come out on its own. But if you have a buildup of wax that's causing problems, there are ways to get it out. For example, you can use certain types of drops to soften the wax so it will come out more easily. You can also irrigate your ear canals with water to wash out the wax.

Conclusion

If these methods don't work, your doctor can get the wax out safely.