

## **EAR WAX TREATMENT**

**(We no longer routinely syringe ears)**

Ear Nose and throat specialists in Nottingham have advised us on the best treatment for wax that is causing deafness. It is our intention at Greasby Group Practice to follow their recommendation.

You put 2 or 3 drops of ordinary olive oil down the ear 2 or 3 times a day for **3 weeks**. This softens the wax so that it then runs out of its own accord. It does not harm the ear. You can continue for any length of time, but 3 weeks is usually enough. Surprisingly, you will not necessarily see wax come out. It often seems to come out unnoticed. If after 3 weeks or more you are still deaf from wax, you will need to make an appointment with a doctor to decide what should be done.

If you **know** you have a wax problem causing deafness and that your ear is healthy you can start the treatment for yourself. We recommend olive oil only. We do **NOT** recommend specially formulated preparations that can be purchased which are not olive. This is because they can irritate healthy ears.

If you are deaf and you **don't know** why, you should see a doctor or a nurse. If we find it is wax causing it we will advise the olive oil treatment for a minimum of 3 weeks.

We know that you may be disappointed in this treatment if you have been used to syringing, but ear syringing can lead to ear infections, perforated ear drum and tinnitus (persistent noise). We must provide **effective and safe treatment** and we feel sure that you will agree.

We occasionally have to undertake syringing for medical reasons. This is decided by a nurse who will ensure that the risks are explained. Only if the patient agrees to accept these risks will we then do it.

If you have a build up of wax repeatedly, you can keep it free by putting olive oil down twice a week. An alternative softener for treatment or prevention is sodium bicarbonate 5% ear drops. This can be obtained from a chemist.

Wax normally comes out of the ear with the skin of the ear canal which grows from deep inside and moves to the outside over about 2 weeks.

**If you have or suspect you have any kind of ear problem other than wax you should NOT put anything down the ear except after medical advice.**