



The *Sound* Wave

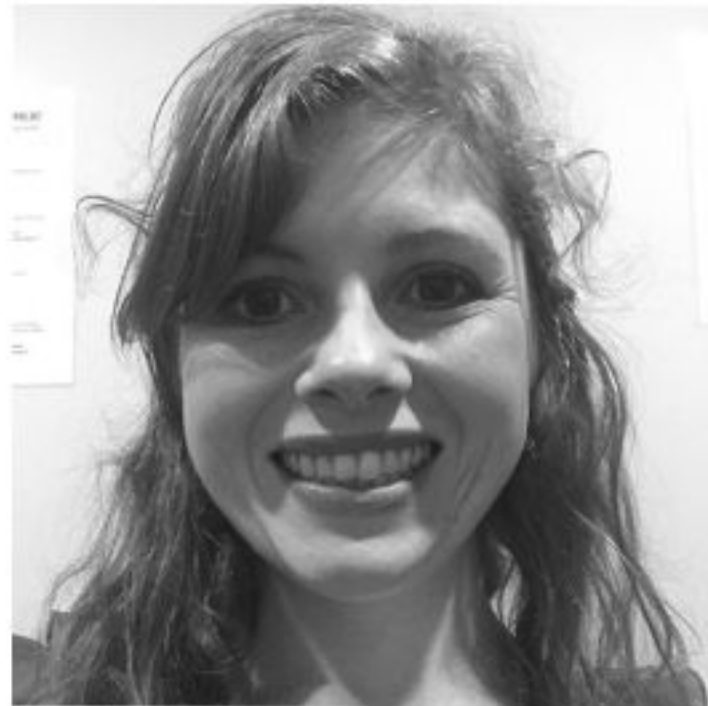
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Latest news

We have had a busy 2019 so far. It's hard to believe we are more than halfway through the year already. We have had numerous opportunities over the last few months with new hearing technology being released, the sponsorship of local community events and we have two new audiologists that have joined our team.



Joanne Le Gall comes to us with over 20 years of experience in a range of clinical settings. She is now working part-time at our North Balwyn and Clayton clinics.



Liz Loader graduated from La Trobe University in 2017 with a Bachelor of Health Science and a Masters of Clinical Audiology. She joins Victorian Hearing with an enthusiastic attitude to assist clients with their hearing difficulties, whilst utilising her genuine and friendly nature. Liz consults at our Mornington, Clayton, CBD and Brighton clinics.

Victorian Hearing sponsors Dorevitch Men's Health Conference

Audiologists Nicole Bowden and Maryam Zargarbashi had a successful event meeting and greeting GPs recently in Melbourne at the Dorevitch Men's Health Conference. The bright lights and friendly smiles at our stand attracted a lot of interest and allowed us to share lots of information regarding new hearing technology and hearing health education with many local doctors and medical professionals.





What is the best way to keep your ears clean? And why/when you should consider having them professionally cleaned

What even is ear wax?

The technical name for earwax is Cerumen. It is a mixture of bodily excretions including sebum- is a light yellow, oily substance that is secreted by glands that help keep the skin and hair moisturised, sweat, dead cells and other particles, such as dust, which may have made their way into your ears.

So why do we make it?

Earwax often makes some stomach's crawl and is incorrectly viewed as “poor hygiene.” Contrary to this belief earwax is actually a sign of a healthy ear!

Ear wax is:

- Antibacterial/antifungal reducing the risk of ear infections
- It provides a protective lubricant layer over the ear canal
- Natural cleanser of the ear

The cells in your ear canal slowly shuffle from the eardrum out to the external part of the ear, carrying with it ear wax and other dirt/debris that may have gathered along with it. We know that jaw movement also helps this natural conveyor belt work.

It is quite amazing that the skin of the ear canal itself has self-migratory ability. Meaning if left on its own it should migrate out of the ear canal slowly.

So if you're over-cleaning your ears for the sake of cleaning it and for that satisfying feeling, you're going to run into more problems than less.

Are cotton buds really that bad for you?

We are all guilty of wriggling a cotton bud in our ear. We feel we are self-cleansing and it's sickly satisfying digging something out.

Sorry to break it to you... cotton buds disrupt the natural migration of earwax out of the ear. If pushed too far, this can cause blockages, perforated eardrums, reduced hearing and the obvious discomfort with all these scenarios.

Cotton buds are however safe and effective for a gentle clean around the opening of the ears.

So when would you ever need ear wax removal?

The ear's ability to naturally self-clean is impressive, however, sometimes it doesn't always work effectively. The following are reasons/groups of people who are likely to need their ears cleaned professionally:

- Those who have pushed the wax in too far with a cleaning tool/cotton bud. This can prevent the earwax from coming out and really affect your ability to hear clearly.
- If you are a hearing aid user/earplug user. Having a moulded earpiece will block the earwax naturally clearing. You're pushing things down, which tends to interrupt the normal migratory quality of the ear canal.
- People with impacted or excessive cerumen production.
- People with narrow ear canals. Surfer's ear, also known as exostosis, is when the bone of the ear canal slowly grows and generally narrows the ear canal. In this circumstance, given the narrow nature of the ear canal, it does not take much wax to block off the ear completely. Therefore water plugs to protect the ears from swimming may be considered. Some are just born with smaller ears/canals in general!

What kind of problems can excess earwax cause?

Excess or impacted earwax can cause:

- if earwax has contact with the eardrum it can be uncomfortable and cause vertigo and dizziness
- a reduction in your natural hearing. If only one ear is affected it can lead to slight imbalance and problems locating where sounds come from
- the lack of ventilation in the ear can cause itchiness/irritation

What does professional ear cleaning involve?

The audiologists at Victorian Hearing are professionally trained in wax removal.

A microscope is used to visualise the ear canal in high resolution. Using either a curette, a small loop device and/or micro-suctioning, a small vacuum, methods are used to gently remove wax.

The method of wax removal used by the audiologists is dependent on the texture of the wax, your ear canal and how deep it is sitting in the canal.

What to Avoid?

Ear candling

This involves a hollow candle being placed in the ear, and the end not in your ear being lit. The idea is that the candle creates a convection current to draw nasties out of your ear, but there's a downside: it doesn't work.

The current created by the heat of the candle isn't enough to pull the earwax out of your ear. There are also risks associated with lighting candles next to your face, burning the eardrum and compacting wax even further.

Don't know if your ears are blocked or need a clean? The best way to find out is to have a professional, such as your GP or audiologist, have a look and assess the health of your ear canal!

If you have any questions feel free to phone our audiologists at Victorian Hearing on (03) 9558 8842.

"To appreciate the beauty of a snowflake
it is necessary to stand in the cold."
(Aristotle)



- ✓ Independent, unbiased advice
- ✓ Australian owned and operated
- ✓ Specialists in 100% invisible hearing
- ✓ University qualified Audiologists
- ✓ Personalised service and care



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