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## *Relieving Earache Pain*

Pain caused by acute otitis media (infection of the middle ear) can be severe. Analgesics such as Tylenol or Motrin are often beneficial. Applying a heating pad or hot water bottle to the outer ear may help.

The pain from an ear infection may subside spontaneously. Nevertheless, it is still important to let us examine your child, because usually the ear drum will be inflamed, and pain may return.

An untreated ear infection can result in hearing loss, spread to the mastoid sinuses, or even meningitis. If you see yellow material draining from the ear, this usually means that the ear drum has perforated, releasing pus. A child may feel better after this happens. Perforations are usually not serious, but we should check your child several weeks after the acute infection to make sure the perforation has healed.

Never place anything in the ear without specific instructions to do so. Some ear drops that are prescribed for a swimmers ear (outer ear infection) are not appropriate for ear pain due to a middle ear infection. In addition to being ineffective, if the eardrum is ruptured, application of these drops can be harmful to the ear.

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