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Your Otitis Media

Read this page to learn about otitis media (o-TI-tis MEE-dee-a)

What is otitis media?

Otitis media is an inflammation of the ear.

There are two kinds of otitis media -

- 1) **otitis media with effusion**, which is fluid
- 2) **acute otitis media**, which is an infection

Sometimes a child will have fluid for a while and then get an infection. Or they may have fluid for weeks after an infection.

The middle ear gets red and swollen.

- The middle ear is behind the eardrum.
- You can't see it from the outside of the ear.
- You need a special light and scope to look into the ear to see the middle ear.

The eustachian tubes get red and swollen too.

- The eustachian tubes are deep inside the ear.
- They connect the middle ear to the back of the throat.
- They open and close to keep the right amount of pressure inside your ears.
- They help keep germs out of the middle ear.
- When you have otitis media, they can't do their job as well.

Otitis media with effusion(fluid) usually doesn't hurt. It feels like the ears are full or stuffed up.

Acute otitis media usually makes your ears hurt a lot. It goes away by itself or with the right medicine.

Who gets otitis media?

- A lot of babies and young children get otitis media.
 - It's a very common problem - only colds happen more.
 - Half of all babies get it by age 1.
 - Almost all children get it by age 3.
- Older children and adults get ear infections less, but they can still get it.

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You can find this page online at:

<http://www.raisingdeafkids.org/hearingloss/causes/otitis/index.jsp>