

Frequently Asked Questions

What To Do About Ear Trauma: Investigating The Common Concerns



1. What is the most common complication from blunt trauma?

The most common complication from blunt trauma to the ear is the formation of auricular hematoma. Failure of early recognition and treatment of this condition usually leads to an ugly deformity known as a “cauliflower” ear.

As presented at the University of Toronto by Vitaly E. Kisilevsky, MD; N Prepageran, MD, FRCS; Michael Hawke, MD, FRSC; and John A. Rutka, MD, FRCS

2. How do you deal with foreign bodies (FBs)?

- Insects should be drowned in mineral oil and then suctioned out.
- Soft or round FBs may be removed by gently inserting an ear curette or hook and rolling them outward.
- The best way to treat sharp or irregular FBs remains grasping and removing with a fine alligator forcep.
- For the correct syringing of impacted wax in the external auditory canal (EAC), the jet of water should be directed posterior-superiorly in order to avoid injury to the EAC and tympanic membrane.

3. How do I treat damage to the inner ear with tinnitus?

Management of this condition initially includes bed rest with head elevation and close monitoring of hearing. In cases where further deterioration of hearing occurs, or persisting perilymphatic/cerebrospinal fluid leakage is suspected, surgical repair would be indicated.

For an in-depth article on ear trauma, please go to page 111.