

AN ELBOW IN YOUR EAR

Your Questions Answered

Last week a reader asked me if it was OK to remove his earwax by using a cotton bud?

NO, NO. A medical adage says you should never put anything smaller than an elbow into anyone's ear. No hairpins, matches or bent paper clips.

Earwax is a normal part of your body's own defences as it's there to protect your ear canal. But too much can reduce hearing and cause pain. Try putting a few drops of olive oil into your ear morning and evening for three days. This can help soften the wax, making it easier to remove. Then, use a dropper with a rubber bulb and GENTLY squirt warm water into the ear, which should help flush out the softened wax.

If you've had problems with your ears before, or this doesn't work, you must see your doctor. Cotton buds will only push wax further in. But then, another caller phoned to ask if ear candles are the answer to getting rid of ear wax.

NEVER! NEVER! NEVER! NEVER! . . Use Hopi ear candles, they are hollow candles that are put in the ear and lit. The fairy tale is that the black, sooty mess collected at the bottom of the candle is a collection of toxins drawn from the body.

What poppycock! Not only do they not work, there are also risks. Some reports show burned ears, hair set on fire and damaged ear drums.

No doubt my post bag will be full of complaining letters and demands for retractions from the people that remove far more cash from your purses than wax and toxins from your ears.

If you really want to waste your cash and risk your health – don't say I didn't warn you.