

Urgent Referral Guidelines

CONDITION	URGENT REFERRAL TO EAR, NOSE, AND THROAT PHYSICIAN IF...	PREVALENCE
Othematoma = cauliflower ear	Visual inspection shows a purplish hard swelling of the external ear. This can result from direct hit on ear e.g., basketball	Sporadic
Foreign body in the ear canal	Visual inspection with an otoscope shows foreign body e.g., peanuts, hearing aid dome, cotton wool.	Sporadic
Otitis externa	Visual inspection with an otoscope shows pink ear canal mucosa, if painful during inspection, or bleeding or moist/fungal spores in dead skin in the ear canal.	More common
Myringitis	Visual inspection with an otoscope shows obvious infection (fever, red or bulbous ear drum) or if painful when flying, driving up and down hills.	Sporadic
Acute otitis media	Visual inspection with an otoscope shows obvious infection (fever, red or purple ear drum) or if painful when flying or driving over hills.	More common e.g., with a cold/sinus trouble
Draining ear	Visual inspection with an otoscope shows purulent flow in the ear canal of thin or thicker moisture.	Sporadic with perforation