

# AAO-HNSF updated clinical practice guideline: Acute otitis externa

February 3 2014

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With one in every 123 people in the United States affected by Acute Otitis Externa or "swimmer's ear" each year, the American Academy of Otolaryngology—Head and Neck Surgery Foundation released an evidence-based guideline to improve the diagnosis and treatment. The guideline, updated from 2006, was published Monday in the journal *Otolaryngology—Head and Neck Surgery*.

"Swimmer's ear affects nearly 1 in 100 people annually and may cause intense pain. Eardrops offer prompt relief, but about one-third of cases are treated with oral antibiotics, which are ineffective and promote resistant bacteria," says Richard M. Rosenfeld, MD, MPH, chair of the guideline development group. "The updated guideline expands upon prior guidance with new clinical trials, new systematic reviews, and consumer participation, intended to optimize the diagnosis and treatment of this common disorder."

The use of topical treatment by antibiotic eardrops rather than [oral antibiotics](#) is among the recommendations made. The Foundation included this recommendation in the national Choosing Wisely® campaign, which encourages physicians and patients to talk about treatment options and pursue only those that are necessary and appropriate for an individual patient. The guideline makes eight recommendations in total.

The [clinical guideline](#) for Acute Otitis Externa was created by a panel that included otolaryngologist—head and neck surgeons, pediatricians,

infectious disease physicians, family medicine professionals, dermatologists, and consumer advocates.

**More information:** *Otolaryngology—Head and Neck Surgery* is the official scientific journal of the American Academy of Otolaryngology—Head and Neck Surgery Foundation (AAO-HNSF). The guideline was published as a supplement to the journal's February edition.

Provided by American Academy of Otolaryngology

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