

# Ear Safety this Summer: Protecting Your Hearing and Preventing Infections



Summer is a time for outdoor adventures, travel, and lots of fun water activities. However, the warm weather and increased exposure to water and loud noises can pose significant risks to our ear health. It is crucial to take proactive steps to protect our ears from damage and infections that can have long-term effects. This guide provides some essential tips on preventing swimmer's ear, protecting your hearing at concerts and during summer yard work, and other general ear safety tips to ensure a healthy and enjoyable summer.

## Preventing Swimmer's Ear

Swimmer's ear, also known as otitis externa, is a common infection that occurs when water and moisture become trapped in the ear canal, creating a breeding ground for bacteria. This condition can cause discomfort, pain, and even impact hearing if left untreated. To prevent swimmer's ear, it is essential to keep the ear canal dry. Here are some tips:



**Use Silicone Earplugs:** Wearing silicone earplugs while swimming or engaging in water activities can significantly reduce the risk of swimmer's ear. These earplugs are designed to keep water out of the ear canal, preventing moisture buildup that can lead to infections.

**Dry Your Ears:** After swimming or showering, gently dry your ears with a towel, tilting your head to drain water from the ears. This helps to remove excess moisture that can contribute to infections.

## Treatment of Swimmer's Ear

If you do contract swimmer's ear, it is essential to seek medical attention promptly. Treatment typically involves eardrops from a doctor to combat the infection. In severe cases, a doctor may need to insert a piece of cotton soaked in medicine into the ear to fight the infection. Pain medication may also be prescribed to manage discomfort.



## Hearing Protection at Concerts

Summer is a popular time for outdoor concerts and festivals, which can expose your ears to extremely loud noises. Prolonged exposure to these high decibel levels can cause permanent hearing loss. Here are some tips to protect your hearing at concerts:

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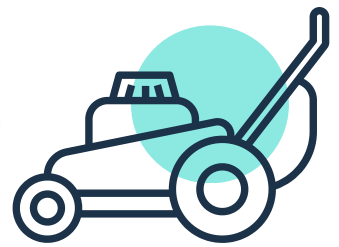


**Keep the Volume Low:** When using headphones or earbuds, keep the volume at a safe level. The Centers for Disease Control recommend keeping the volume below 85 decibels to prevent hearing damage.

**Wear Protective Headphones:** Use protective headphones or earplugs to shield your ears from dangerous sounds. These can be found at local hardware stores.

## Hearing Protection During Summer Yard Work

Summer yard work, such as lawn mowing or using power tools, can also expose your ears to loud noises. Here are some tips to protect your hearing:



**Wear Protective Headphones:** Use protective headphones or earplugs to shield your ears from dangerous sounds. These can be found at local hardware stores.

**Keep the Volume Low:** When using headphones or earbuds, keep the volume at a safe level. The Centers for Disease Control recommend keeping the volume below 85 decibels to prevent hearing damage.

## General Ear Safety Tips

In addition to these specific tips, there are some general ear safety tips to keep in mind:

**Stay Hydrated:** Dehydration can lead to thickened ear wax, which can cause discomfort and impact hearing. Stay hydrated to keep your ears clean and healthy.



**Avoid Inserting Objects:** Never insert objects like cotton swabs, fingernails, or pointed objects into your ears, as these can scratch the ear canal and increase the risk of infections.

**Get Regular Check-Ups:** Before or after summer trips, have your ears and hearing checked by a doctor or audiologist to detect potential problems early and take preventive measures.

By following these ear safety tips, you can enjoy a healthy and enjoyable summer while protecting your ears from damage and infections. Remember to stay hydrated, avoid inserting objects into your ears, and get regular check-ups to ensure optimal ear health.