

Quay points

*The Patient Newsletter for East Quay Medical Centre
Spring 2022*



Ear Irrigation Services

What is Ear Irrigation

Ear irrigation is also known as water irrigation. Ear irrigation uses a small irrigation unit that is safe, gentle, and effective.

The irrigation unit uses water which is heated to body temperature (37°C) which is sent out at low pressure into the ear canal.

This flushes out any debris including a build-up of earwax from the canal.

Earwax build up!

Commonly the body will keep the amount of earwax under control. Too much earwax can result in a blockage in the ear causing earaches, ringing in the ears or temporary hearing loss.

If you have a buildup of earwax ear irrigation might be what you need!

Causes of earwax build-up!

A build-up of earwax can happen for a few reasons including:

- You have narrow or damaged ear canals
- You have lots of hair in your ear canals
- You have a skin condition affecting your scalp or around your ear
- You have inflammation of your ear canal

Services

| | |
|--|---|
| Clear Hear Solutions 33a High Street, Bridgewater 07722023005 | £40 for one ear £50 for two ears |
| Clear-Ears Somerset Jacqui Gailey RGN 07879442212 | £45.00 |
| The Hearing Care Partnership at David Bull Optometrists in Burnham on Sea 01278 588404 | £95.00 |
| Clear Microsuction Clinic at Highbridge Enterprise Centre 01278550254 | £35.00 for one ear £60.00 for two ears |
| Blackdown Hearing 01823 586777 | £60.00 |

How to treat earwax build-up yourself!

If you suffer from any symptoms of blocked ears, you can treat it yourself, before getting professional help.

If you have blocked ears, put 2 to 3 drops of medical grade olive or almond oil in your ear twice a day for a few days.

It is recommended you use a dropper while lying your head on one side for a few minutes to let the oil work its way through your ear canal.

Over about 2 weeks you might notice a lump of earwax from your ear.

If there's no evidence, then you will need to contact an ear irrigation service.

Are you traveling abroad this summer?



If you're planning to travel outside the UK, you may need to be vaccinated against some of the serious diseases found in other parts of the world.

Vaccinations are available to protect you against infections such as yellow fever, typhoid, and hepatitis A.

In the UK, the NHS routine immunisation (vaccination) schedule protects you against a number of diseases but does not cover all the infectious diseases found overseas.

Changes to service at East Quay Medical Centre.

The main change to our service is that we are unable to provide a service for any non- NHS vaccines at the current time. However, not to worry! You can still get your much needed travel vaccines from other providers. The easiest option for you to get your travel vaccinations at the moment would be to visit a comprehensive travel service, as they will be able to do all your vaccinations at once. Some providers include:

- Boots Pharmacy
- Superdrug Pharmacy
- Bath Travel Clinic (NOMAD)
- Masta Travel Health

You can find other providers by searching online or phoning around to pharmacies.

We know it is far from ideal and we apologise for making this a little harder. While we can still offer travel advice and NHS vaccines, we can't provide the full service of all vaccines needed due to some not being NHS funded and because we

post-covid, also due to pressures already within the NHS. Rest assured; we can however provide you with an overview of your immunisation history if this is needed by the travel vaccination service that you go to. You will just need to let us know.

Which travel vaccines do I need?

Some countries require proof of vaccination (for example, for polio or yellow fever vaccination), which must be documented on an International Certificate of Vaccination or Prophylaxis (ICVP) before you enter or when you leave a country.

Not all travel vaccinations are available free on the NHS, even if they're recommended for travel to a certain area.

Other non-NHS travel vaccines will be charged.

You'll have to pay for travel vaccinations against:

- hepatitis B
- Japanese encephalitis
- meningitis vaccines
- rabies
- tick-borne encephalitis
- tuberculosis (TB)
- yellow fever

Yellow fever vaccines are only available from designated centres.

The cost of travel vaccines that are not available on the NHS will vary, depending on the vaccine and number of doses you need. It's worth considering this when budgeting for your trip.

Which travel vaccines are free?

The following travel vaccines are available free on the NHS if your GP practice is signed up to provide vaccination (immunisation) services.

- polio (given as a combined diphtheria/tetanus/polio jab)
- typhoid
- hepatitis A

These vaccines are free because they protect against diseases thought to represent the greatest risk to public health if they were brought into the country.

How do I stay healthy on my trip?

Water

Diseases can be caught from drinking contaminated water, or swimming in it. Unless you know the water, supply is safe where you are staying, ONLY USE (in order of preference)

1. Boiled water
2. Bottled water or canned drinks
3. Water treated by a sterilising agent.

This includes water used to make ice cubes in drinks and water for cleaning your teeth

Swimming

It is safer to swim in water that is well chlorinated. If you are travelling to Africa, South America, or some parts of the Caribbean, avoid swimming in freshwater lakes and streams. You can catch a parasitic disease called schistosomiasis from such places. This disease is also known as Bilharzia. It is also wise never to go barefoot, but to wear protective footwear when out, even on the beach. Other diseases can be caught from sand and soil, particularly wet soil.

Personal Hygiene

Many diseases are transmitted by what is known as the 'faecal-oral' route. To help prevent this, always wash your hands with soap and clean water after going to the toilet, before eating and before handling food. Using hand gel is another sensible option.

Insect Bites

Mosquitoes, certain types of flies, ticks and bugs can cause many different diseases. e.g. malaria, dengue fever, yellow fever. Some bite at night, but some during daytime so protection is always needed.

Avoid being bitten by:

- Covering up skin as much as possible if going out at night, (mosquitoes that transmit malaria bite from dusk until dawn). Wear loose fitting clothes, long sleeves, trousers, or long skirts.

- Use insect repellents on exposed skin. (DEET containing products are the most effective. A content of up to 50% DEET is recommended for tropical destinations). Clothes can be sprayed with repellents too or clothing specific sprays e.g. permethrin. Check suitability for children on the individual products. If using sunscreen always apply first, followed by an insect repellent spray on top.

- If room is not air conditioned, but is screened, close shutters early evening and spray room with knockdown insecticide spray. In malarious regions, if camping, or sleeping in unprotected accommodation, always sleep under a mosquito net (impregnated with permethrin). Avoid camping near areas of stagnant water, these are common breeding areas for mosquitoes etc.

- Electric insecticide vaporisers are very effective as long as there are no power failures!

- There is no scientific evidence that electric buzzers, savoury yeast extract, tea tree oil, bath oils, garlic and vitamin B are effective.

- Homeopathic and herbal medications should NEVER be used as an alternative to conventional measures for malaria prevention.

How to stay safe on my travels

Personal safety and security

The Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) provide excellent information about this. They have information for many different types of travel and also advise on travel to specific destinations in times of political unrest and natural disasters. Please go to their website for more information at

<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/foreign-commonwealth-office>

Insurance cover

- Take out adequate insurance cover for your trip. This should possibly include medical repatriation as without it, this service is extremely expensive if needed.
- If you have any pre-existing medical conditions, make sure you inform the insurance company of these details and check the small print of the policy thoroughly.
- If you travel to a European Union country, make sure you have obtained an EHIC card before you travel which takes some time to obtain. Further information about the EHIC is found at <http://www.nhs.uk/NHSEngland/Healthcareabroad/EHIC/Pages/Applyingandrenewing.aspx>
- Please note, additional travel insurance is still advised even if you have an EHIC card

Air Travel

It is sensible on any long-haul flight to be comfortable in your seat. Exercise your legs, feet and toes while sitting every half an hour or so and take short walks whenever feasible. Upper body and breathing exercises can further improve circulation. Drink plenty of water and be sensible about alcohol intake which in excess leads to dehydration. Further information can be obtained from the websites detailed at the end of this leaflet with more specific advice and information on travel-related deep vein thrombosis.

Sun and Heat

Sunburn and heat-stroke cause serious problems in travellers but in the long term can be a serious cause of skin cancer. There is no such thing as a safe suntan, but the following advice should be taken:

Precautionary guidelines

- Increase sun exposure gradually, with a 20 minute limit initially.
- Use sun blocks which contain both UVA and UVB protection and sufficient sun protection factor (SPF) and a minimum of SPF 15. Children under 3 years should have a minimum of SPF 25 and babies under 6 months should be kept out of the sun at all times. Reapply often and always after swimming and washing. Read manufacturer instructions
- Always apply sunscreen first followed by an insect repellent spray on top
- Wear protective clothing – sunhats, T shirts and sunglasses etc.
- Avoid going out between 11am - 3pm, when the sun's rays are strongest
- Take special care of children and those with pale skin/red hair
- Drink extra fluids in a hot climate – be aware alcohol can make you dehydrated

Enjoy your vacation



Hay fever

When is hay fever worse?

Hay fever is usually worse between late March and September, especially when it's warm, humid, and windy. This is when the pollen count is at its highest.

Symptoms of hay fever

- Sneezing and coughing
- A runny or block nose
- Itchy, red, or watery eyes
- Itchy throat, mouth, nose, and ears
- Loss of smell
- Pain around your temples and forehead
- Headaches
- Earache
- Feeling tired

If you have asthma, you might also:

- Have a tight feeling in your chest
- Be short of breath
- Wheeze and cough

Hay fever will last for weeks or months, unlike a cold, which usually goes away after 1 to 2 weeks.

What causes hay fever

Hay fever is an allergic reaction to pollen, typically when it comes into contact with your mouth, nose, eyes, and throat. Pollen is a fine powder from plants.

A pharmacist can help with hay fever

Speak to your pharmacist if you have hay fever. They can give you advice and suggest the best treatments, like antihistamine drops, tablets or nasal sprays.

How to treat hay fever yourself

There's currently no cure for hay fever and you cannot prevent it, however you can do things to ease your symptoms when the pollen count is high.

Do –

- Put Vaseline around your nostrils to trap pollen
- Wear wraparound sunglasses to stop pollen getting into your eyes
- Shower and change your clothes after you have been outside to wash pollen off
- Stay indoors whenever possible
- Keep windows and doors shut as much as possible
- Vacuum regularly and dust with a damp cloth
- Buy a pollen filter for the air vents in your car and a vacuum cleaner with a HEPA filter.

Don't –

- Do not cut grass or walk on grass
- Do not spend too much time outside
- Do not keep fresh flowers in the house
- Do not smoke or be around smoke – it makes your symptoms worse
- Do not dry clothes outside – they can catch pollen
- Do not let pets into the house if possible – they can carry pollen indoor

Here is a selection of activities and information available for you and your families:

Somerset Support



Somerset Coronavirus Helpline

0300 790 6275

Available 8am - 6pm every day

Citizens Advice

0808 27 87842

www.citizensadvice.com/somerset.org.uk

Healthy Somerset

www.healthysomerset.co.uk

Mindline

01823 276 892

Redundancy & Employment Support

www.stepupsomerset.org.uk

Somerset Activity & Sports Partnership

01823 653 990

www.sasp.co.uk/activities

Somerset Carers Support

0800 316 8600

www.somersetcarers.org

Somerset Community Connect

www.somersetcommunityconnect.org.uk

Somerset Village & Community Agents

01823 331 222

www.somersetagents.org

Talking Cafes

www.facebook.com/talkingcafesomerset

Volunteering

www.sparkachange.org.uk

www.volunteering.somerset.gov.uk

If you need help, advice or support, please don't forget we're here to help. To receive Somerset Coronavirus updates via email, sign up at:

www.somerset.gov.uk/coronavirus



www.somerset.gov.uk/coronavirus

Bridgwater Carers Support Group



Do you look after the other half, family or friend who is ill, elderly, disabled or needs a bit of help?

Come along and chat with others who are also recognised as unpaid carers to share laughs, ideas and support in a relaxed atmosphere.

Regular professional speakers and signposting.

Last Thursday of every month

10:30 - 12:00

The Hub, Angel Place Shopping Centre, TA6 3TQ

For details about the group contact Cath 07951944420
Laureng@somersetcc.org.uk
cath.holloway@sparksomerset.org.uk



For personal, 1:1 support as a Carer

contact Somerset Carers!

0800 31 68 600

www.somersetcarers.org

"They all understand what we are going through" - Ann

Call Somerset Carers Service for support with finding someone to look after your cared for whilst you come to the meeting!

A registered charity

Whatever you're facing
We're here to listen

Call free day or night on
116 123

Email
jo@samaritans.org

SAMARITANS

samaritans.org

NHS

Need to talk?

Call Childline free on 0800 111.

They are here for you - you are not alone.

Disabled parking bays located at the Front of the surgery

Please remember when parking in the surgery car park that the yellow disabled parking bays are only to be used by blue badge holders.

The bays are **NOT** for dropping off, or to be parked in without displaying a blue badge.

Not all disabilities are visible but please respect the people who do park in these parking bays who are blue badge holders.

Thank you

Our Surgery details:

East Quay Medical Centre
East Quay
Bridgwater
Somerset
TA6 4GP

Reception: 01278 444666
Prescriptions: 01278 446006

www.eastquaymedicalcentre.com

Onsite Opticians: 01278 440440
Onsite Pharmacy: 01278 423015
Onsite Dentist: 01278 411141