



Mid-ear Child's Infection

Otitis Media

Otitis media is a term for several conditions that can affect the middle ear. It can range from acute to chronic and be present with or without symptoms. It is an inflammation in the middle ear often accompanied by signs of middle ear effusion or infection. It makes no reference to etiology or pathogenesis but is a general term. Acute otitis media is inflammation of the middle ear with rapid and short onset of signs and symptoms of middle ear infection.

Over the past fifteen years there has been a notable increase in the number of children diagnosed with otitis media. Otitis media is the most common reason for physician office visits by children under age 15. Children under age 15 account for 81% of the visits and children under age 2 had the highest rate of visits to physicians for otitis media. So common is it that an ever-growing number of people in our society accept it as a normal part of growing up.

Osteopathic Treatment

Most physicians use antibiotics because they view the ear infection as taking place solely within the ear itself. Osteopathic Physicians realize it's not the ear that needs the treatment, but the entire body. The problem actually starts with trauma at the child's birth, when the respiratory reflex at birth affects lymphatic drainage in the neck and the upper part of the shoulder. One of the solutions is to treat and balance the sacrum, pelvis and the rib cage, which gets the lymphatic fluid flowing through the system.

Also, the site of infection in the ear is determined by lowered resistance on the side with the structural disturbance of the temporal bone of the child's head. Slow and very gentle alternating external and internal rotation of the temporal bones of the child's head will sometimes bring drainage and relief. Generally a specific temporal bone lesion, among other things, will exist and need to be addressed and treated.

The solution involves rotating the temporal bones and applying a gentle, slow, alternate, pumping action on the child's head.

Adjunctive advice would include guidance regarding the other common and interconnected causes of otitis media which include allergy (mostly food borne), depressed immunity and nutritional deficiency. A full review of these factors is beyond the scope of this paper but mention must be made that of all foods, cow's milk and other dairy products are probably the number one contributor to childhood ear problems. Other common food allergies include: wheat, eggs, chocolate, citrus, corn, soy, peanuts, sugar, and yeast. Passive smoking also increases the incidence of otitis media nearly three times. Ear drops are not generally known to cure earaches, but they can provide what most parents and children are after -relief of symptoms. One of the most effective herbs is mullein, used as drops in oil.

The herb should be heated slightly by placing the bottle in warm water. Use a dropper to test that the oil is not too warm on the inside of your wrist, then place three drops in the affected ear and plug with cotton. Repeat three times per day re-using the same piece of cotton. Eardrops should not be used when there is fluid draining out of the middle ear.

A specific homeopathic remedy can also prove remarkably effective in the treatment of otitis media.

These are only some of the specific techniques that Osteopathic Physicians have been using to successfully treat otitis media since near the beginning of the professions conception. The aim of this article is not to exhaustingly list every described technique but to provide some initial information and stimulate thought. As osteopathic Physicians, wherever they feel a problem exists in the body; that is where their treatment should take them. The osteopathic treatment should consider the whole body and any/all mechanical obstruction which will improve drainage of mucous or liquid from the middle ear.

Following on from this most recent research critique it can be seen that, in general, the standard allopathic treatment for otitis media is not as effective as physicians, patients or parents would like it to be.

Osteopathic Physicians also, are acutely aware that the standard medical approach is not designed to cure this disease but to treat symptomatically. Due to the fact that research validates a protocol for uncomplicated otitis media (acute or with effusion), it is advised to avoid antibiotics and to proceed with administration of Osteopathic Manipulative Medicine (OMM) under observation.

It is important that people should be aware that many osteopaths are not medical doctors, are not recognized by social health insurance, nor health ministry and nor the Order of Physicians and this is very common in Lebanon, so patients, for their wellbeing, should call and verify at the LOP (Lebanese Order of Physicians) if the therapist is a certified medical doctor.

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OSTEOPATHIC MEDICINE

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