

## Referral Support Service

ENT

### ENT01

#### Acute Otitis Media

#### Contact on call ENT is patient has Acute Otitis Media and any of the below:

- Mastoiditis
- Vertigo
- Facial palsy
- Post-auricular swelling

#### Management

- Advise patient/carer regarding symptomatic pain relief with **paracetamol OR ibuprofen** (For children consider alternating between paracetamol and ibuprofen if distress persists or recurs before the next dose is due).
- **Antibiotics** – avoid antibiotics where possible as 60% are better within 24 hours. For most people, advise either a no antibiotic prescribing strategy, or a delayed antibiotic prescribing strategy.
- **If antibiotic necessary (see below for criteria):** A 5-day course of either - first line: **amoxicillin**; alternative (penicillin allergy): **erythromycin** for children <12 years/ **clarithromycin** for children ≥12 years (as per [local antibiotic guidance](#))
- People who are systemically unwell (but who do not require admission)
- People at high risk of serious complications because of significant heart, lung, renal, liver, or neuromuscular disease, immunosuppression, or cystic fibrosis, and young children who were born prematurely.
- People whose symptoms of AOM have already lasted for 4 days or more and are not improving.
- Children younger than 2 years of age with bilateral AOM.
- Children younger than 3 months of age with AOM (consider admission if unwell) especially if temp over 38°C.
- Also consider admission in children 3-6 months of age with temp of over 39°C.
- Children with perforation and/or discharge in the ear canal (otorrhoea) in association with

AOM.

## **Referral Information**

### **Indications for referral**

Any of

- Failure of above treatment
- 3 x episodes in 6 months or 4 episodes in 12 months
- Severe ear pain
- Large or recurrent perforation
- Persistent ear effusion *in spite of above treatment*
- Otitis media with effusion rarely develops in adults. Unilateral effusion persisting for more than two months warrants referral to exclude a nasopharyngeal carcinoma.

### **Information to include in referral letter**

- Duration of symptoms
- Relevant past medical / surgical history
- Current regular medication
- Smoking status in adults

### **Patient information leaflets/ PDAs**

- <http://www.patient.co.uk/doctor/acute-otitis-media-in-children>
- <http://www.patient.co.uk/doctor/acute-otitis-media-in-adults>
- <http://sdm.rightcare.nhs.uk/pda/glue-ear/>

### **References**

- <http://cks.nice.org.uk/otitis-m.edia-acute> (updated July 2015)