

Cotton Buds Can Damage Hearing, Researchers Say

VOCABULARY WORDS

1. irritation /,irə'tāSH(ə)n/ inflammation or other discomfort in a body part caused by reaction to an irritant substance.
Example: Some chemicals cause a direct irritation to the skin leading to dermatitis.
2. essential /ə'sen(t)SHəl/ absolutely necessary; extremely important.
Example: It is essential to always update the records.
3. indication /,ində'kāSH(ə)n/ a sign or piece of information that indicates something.
Example: Her visit was an indication that she has already forgiven him.
4. sweat /swet/ to produce liquid on the surface of your skin when you are hot, nervous, or ill
Example: She wiped her sweat off her forehead.
5. blockage /'blākij/ an obstruction which makes movement or flow difficult or impossible.
Example: There was a blockage in the pipes that's why water wasn't flowing.



Grandparents have told us for decades not to stick anything smaller than your elbow into our ears. Ear specialists in the USA, the American Academy of Otolaryngology, agree. They say that cleaning your ears with cotton buds (aka Q-tips) can cause long-lasting damage to your ears and hearing.

1. What have grandparents told us for decades?
2. What are cotton buds also known as?

3. What did the ear specialists warn against?

Dr Jennifer Caudle said cotton buds seem harmless but can cause damage. She said: "People want to stick things in their ears and they think it's the right thing to do, but [cotton buds] can cause holes in the eardrum, **irritation** in the canal, and can [make it easier to get] infections."

4. What did a doctor say cotton buds can seem?
5. What can cotton buds cause holes in?
6. What makes it easier for people to get when they use cotton buds?

The Academy recommended that people think of earwax as an **essential** substance to keep our ears healthy. Dr Seth Schwartz said: "People...want to clean their ears because they believe earwax is an **indication** of uncleanliness."

7. What did an academy recommend people to think of?
8. What do people think earwax is an indication of?

This misinformation leads to unsafe ear health habits." Our body produces earwax to do the essential job of cleaning the ears, stopping them from drying out, and helping them to **sweat** naturally. It also protects the ears against bacteria, bugs and dust. Cotton buds can push earwax further inside the ear and cause **blockages**.

9. What did doctors say the body produces earwax for?
10. What does earwax protect the ear against besides bacteria and bugs?
11. What does pushing ear wax inside the ear cause?

DISCUSSION

1. What things do you do that could damage your ears?
2. Have you ever hurt or damaged your ears?
3. What other misinformation do companies of health products give?
4. What should people do for an earache?
5. How important is our sense of hearing?