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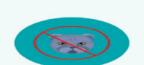












## After conjunctivitis, fungal ear infection cases rise; 5 ways to protect yourself

s the much-awaited monsoon season arrives, it brings respite from scorching heat and revives the earth with its life-giving rains. However, amid the enchanting showers, lurks a silent threat to our aural well-being. After conjunctivitis outbreak, monsoon's high humidity and damp environment created a perfect breeding ground for fungal infections in the ears. These infections, though common, can be uncomfortable and potentially detrimental to our hearing abilities if left untreated. To ensure our auditory health remains intact during this season, it is essential to understand the mechanisms through which the monsoon triggers fungal infections in the ears and adopt proactive measures to protect ourselves. In this article, we will explore five effective ways to shield our ears from monsoon-related fungal infections, enabling us to embrace the season without compromising our

Dr. Swagata Tambe, MD, DNB, FCPS, DDV, Fellow of ISD, Switzerland and CODFI says, "Ear infections can afflict different parts of the ear, including the external, middle, and rarely, the inner ear. The root cause of these infections is often straightforward. As the rainy season approaches, the humidity levels rise, creating an ideal environment for bacteria and fungi to thrive. Additionally, the presence of debris or minor injuries caused by the use of earbuds further contributes to the

Furthermore, infections can also arise from common colds, flu, and allergies. These conditions lead to congestion and inflammation in the nasal passages, throat, and middle ear. When fluid accumulates in the middle ear, it creates a breeding ground for infections to take hold. In summary, ear infections can be categorized into two types: bacterial and fungal infections. By exploring the various factors that contribute to these infections, we can gain a deeper understanding of their origins and take proactive measures to prevent them.

Common Symptoms of Ear Infections

Ear infections, regardless of their location in the ear—be it the inner, outer, or middle ear—manifest through a set of shared symptoms. By familiarizing ourselves with these indicators, we can promptly identify and address potential infections.



The common symptoms include: Severe ear pain Discharge from the infected ear

Intense headache

Reduced hearing and dizziness

### Keep Your Ears Dry

Moisture is a breeding ground for fungi, making it crucial to keep your ears dry during the monsoon season. After getting wet in the rain or swimming, gently dry your ears using a soft towel or a hairdryer set to a low, cool setting. Be sure to tilt your head to the side to allow any trapped water to drain out.

Avoid Inserting Objects into Your Ears

It's important to refrain from inserting any objects into your ears, such as cotton swabs or sharp instruments, as they can cause damage to the delicate ear canal and increase the risk of fungal infections. Instead, gently clean the outer ear with a clean cloth or use specially designed ear drops as recommended by a healthcare professional.

### Maintain Good Ear Hygiene

According to Dr. Tambe, "Practicing good ear hygiene is essential for preventing fungal infections. Clean your ears regularly with a gentle, non-irritating cleanser recommended by a healthcare professional. Avoid using excessive force or aggressive cleaning techniques that can irritate the ear canal and disrupt its natural pro-

### Stay Mindful of Moisture-Prone Environments

During monsoon, be cautious of environments that are prone to moisture buildup. such as swimming pools, showers, or areas with high humidity. Minimize prolonged exposure to such environments and ensure proper drying of your ears afterwards. If you participate in watersports or spend a significant amount of time in the water consider using earplugs designed to keep water out.

### Seek prompt medical attention

"If you experience any unusual symptoms in your ears, such as persistent itching discharge, pain, or hearing difficulties, seek prompt medical attention from an ENT specialist. Early detection and treatment of fungal infections can prevent complications and ensure a swift recovery," advises Dr. Tambe.

# How to raise calm children amidst chaos of the modern world

arenting in the modern world can be overwhelming and challenging, especially with the ever-increasing demands of our fast-paced lives. Juggling work, family, and personal commitments often leaves parents feeling stressed and disconnected from their children. In the midst of this chaos, mindful parenting emerges as a powerful approach to foster a deep connection with our children while navigating the challenges of daily life.

Empathy and Compassion: Listening without judgement

Yashvi Prakash, Counselling Psychologist and Founder of Serenity Wellness says, "One of the fundamental aspects of mindful parenting is cultivating empathy and compassion. As parents, it is essential to try to listen and understand our children's experiences without judgement.

Rather than dismissing their emotions or imposing our beliefs on them, we must create a safe space for open communication. By acknowledging and validating their feelings, we provide our children with the comfort and support they need to express them-

### Projection: Recognizing and overcoming

er into interactions with our children unintentionally. It is crucial to be aware of this ental emot tendency and avoid projecting negative emotions from other situations onto our children.

For instance, if we had a stressful day at work, we must refrain from reacting impatiently to our child's innocent questions. Instead, take a moment to calm ourselves and respond with mindfulness.

Validation: Affirming your child's emotions

According to Prakash, "Validation is a powerful tool in mindful parenting. Often, children may experience emotions that seem trivial to adults, but to them, these feelings are significant. As parents, we must take the time to validate our child's emotions and feelings. By acknowledging their experiences, we show them that we respect their feelings, and they feel seen and under-

### Shaming: Encouraging open expression

Shaming a child for their emotions or experiences can have long-lasting negative effects on their self-esteem and emotional well-being. Mindful parenting encourages open expression without judgement or shame. Rather than dismissing their emotions with statements like, "Don't be silly," or "You shouldn't feel that way," we can say, "I understand that you're feeling upset, and it's okay to feel that way.

### Boundary Setting: Fostering respectful communication

"Setting boundaries is essential in any relationship, including the parent-child dynamic. Mindful parenting involves setting healthy boundaries with our children and, equally important, respecting their boundaries as well. Engage in conversations about these boundaries beforehand to ensure both sides understand the reasoning behind them. This approach promotes mutual respect and enhances the parent-child bond," says Prakash,



# 6 things to do and not do when spending time alone

hen spending time alone, how we utilise all that solitude can significantly impact our well-being and personal growth. Sometimes it is all we need to bounce back in life. Taking a break from work or even from socialisation is important. But there are a few things that you must do or avoid when spending time alone. Here are six essential things you must

### Engage in self-reflection

Use your alone time to do some self-reflection and introspection. Take a deeper look at your thoughts, emotions, and experiences. Ask yourself meaningful questions about your values, goals, and aspirations. Journaling can be a powerful tool to facilitate this process, allowing you to gain insights into your inner world and understand yourself better.

### Do not isolate yourself completely

Yes spending time alone is great and good for your sanity but you must strike a balance and not isolate yourself completely from social interactions. Human connections are important for our emotional well-being. Make sure you meet up with friends, family, or join social activities that align with your interests.

### Pursue your passions and hobbies

Alone time is perfect for pursuing your passions and hobbies. Whether it's painting, writing, playing a musical instrument, or engaging in any creative activity, embrace the freedom to indulge in what brings you joy. This not only fosters creativity but also provides a sense of fulfillment and accomplishment.

### Disconnect from technology

Use your alone time to disconnect from digital devices and social media. Constant connectivity can lead to information overload. Unplugging also lets you reconnect with your thoughts and emotions. Besides, no one needs extra screen time either.

### Do not dwell on negative thoughts

During alone time, it's natural for negative thoughts or past regrets to surface. However, dwelling on them can hinder your personal growth. Acknowledge these thoughts without judgment, but actively work on focusing more on the positive aspects of life and constructive thinking.

### Do not overwhelm yourself with productivity

Do make some alone time but do not overwhelm yourself with excessive expectations. Avoid turning solitude into a task-driven experience. Embrace leisure and relaxation during your alone time, allowing yourself to recharge and unwind. Alone time does not mean cleaning or putting things together only. Sometimes, not doing anything too is important.

