

Otitis Media

Signs & Symptoms of OTM

Common signs and symptoms in children include:

- Ear pain, especially when lying down
- Tugging or pulling at an ear
- Difficulty sleeping
- Crying more than usual
- Acting more irritable than usual
- Difficulty hearing or responding to sounds
- Loss of balance
- Headache
- Fever of 100 F (38 C) or higher
- Drainage of fluid from the ear
- Loss of appetite
- Vomiting
- Diarrhea

Nonspecific signs and symptoms (rhinitis, cough, and/or diarrhea) are often present.

The onset of signs and symptoms of OTM is usually rapid.

Assess

Febrile infant under three months of age
 Febrile infant aged 3–6 months with a temperature of 102 or higher
 Infant under six months of age with any s/s of OTM.
 Febrile infant over 6 months of age with temperature of 102 or higher that is unresponsive to fever-reducing medications.
 Infant or toddler is sleepless or irritable after a cold or other upper respiratory infection.

S/S of a **non-severe illness** are present:
 The infant is over 6 months of age.
 Mild otalgia
 Temperature less than 102.2 F (39°C) in the past 24 hours.
 The infant/child is otherwise healthy.

S/S of **severe illness** are present:
 Moderate to severe otalgia
 Temperature greater than 102.2 F (39°C)
 Presence of fluid, pus or bloody discharge from the ear
 Continuous vomiting
 Unable to keep awake
 Severe, persistent headache
 Child looks very ill
 Non-severe symptoms last for more than 48 hours or are worsening.

REFER
to
Medical
Provider

EDUCATE

Continued observation by parent
 Worsening of s/s
 S/S of severe illness
 S/S lasting more than 48 hours

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Medication Therapy
 Antipyretics for the fever
 Acetaminophen (Tylenol®)
 Ibuprofen (Motrin®)
 No ibuprofen to infants < 6 months without provider approval

Correct Use of Medications
 Including following manufacturers recommendations, combined therapies, and overdosing dangers.

Decongestants and Antihistamines not recommended for children with ear infections.

Never give children aspirin!