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Steps for Improving Earwax Removal

Based on Welch Allyn's experience with recent customers, here are four key steps you can take to improve the removal of earwax.

1. **Use an earwax softener (cerumenolytic).** Best done 15 minutes prior to irrigation. Typically this is done in the exam room, whereby the provider will administer a few drops and leave to see another patient while the softener is activating. The other option is, if the patient has chronic earwax problems (cerumen build up) or a severe impaction of earwax, the provider can recommend an over the counter earwax softener to be used for a week, prior to the office visit.
2. **Perform an ear tug to straighten the ear canal.** An ear tug is best performed by using your free hand to grasp the outer edge of the top half of the ear (pinna). While tugging on the ear, insert the tip of the handle into the ear canal to create a seal.
Children under 3 year: Pull the ear straight back.
Children aged 3 year to adult: Pull the ear up and back.
Refer to page 7 of the Operator's Manual for more details.
3. **Rotate the handle during the procedure.** By gently rotating the handle from left to right during the procedure, it helps the water to circulate inside the ear canal. This will help in loosening the earwax for removal.
4. **Increase the temperature of the water.** After the temperature sensor turns from blue to white (white signifying the water has reached a temperature of at least 90 degrees Fahrenheit), try increasing the hot water slightly. Warm water is a natural earwax softener. The warmer the temperature of water, the quicker it is able to break down the earwax.