

Table 37: Clinical evidence profile: water ear drops 15 minutes prior to syringing versus no ear drops prior to syringing for earwax

Quality assessment							No of patients		Effect		Quality
No of studies	Design	Risk of bias	Inconsistency	Indirectness	Imprecision	Other considerations	Water ear drops 15 minutes prior to syringing	No ear drops prior to syringing	Relative (95% CI)	Absolute	
Attempts needed to syringe until visibly clear of wax (follow-up mean 15 minutes; range of scores: 0-unstated; Better indicated by lower values)											
1	randomised trials	serious ¹	no serious inconsistency	no serious indirectness	serious ²	none	22	17	-	MD 17.9 lower (36.88 lower to 1.08 higher)	LOW
Adverse outcomes for syringing (follow-up mean 15 minutes)											
1	randomised trials	very serious ^{1,3}	no serious inconsistency	no serious indirectness	very serious ²	none	1/22 (4.5%)	5.9%	RR 0.77 (0.05 to 11.48)	14 fewer per 1000 (from 56 fewer to 618 more)	VERY LOW

¹ Downgraded by 1 increment if the majority of the evidence was at high risk of bias, and downgraded by 2 increments if the majority of the evidence was at very high risk of bias

² Downgraded by 1 increment if the confidence interval crossed one MID or by 2 increments if the confidence interval crossed both MIDs

³ Single event in both arms was in the same participant