

**Table 48: Clinical Evidence Profile: water (single application) prior to immediate syringing versus oil ear drops (repeated applications) prior to delayed syringing for earwax**

Quality assessment							No of patients		Effect		Quality
No of studies	Design	Risk of bias	Inconsistency	Indirectness	Imprecision	Other considerations	Water (single application) prior to immediate syringing	Oil ear drops (repeated applications) prior to delayed syringing	Relative (95% CI)	Absolute	
<b>Wax cleared at up to five syringes (follow-up 0-3 days<sup>1</sup>)</b>											
1	randomised trials	very serious <sup>2</sup>	no serious inconsistency	no serious indirectness	no serious imprecision	none	21/22 (95.5%)	95.5%	RR 1.04 (0.92 to 1.19)	38 more per 1000 (from 76 fewer to 181 more)	LOW
<b>Ease of syringing - number of syringes needed to clear (follow-up 0-3 days<sup>1</sup>; range of scores: 1-6; Better indicated by lower values)</b>											
1	randomised trials	very serious <sup>2</sup>	no serious inconsistency	no serious indirectness	serious <sup>3</sup>	none	22	20	-	MD 0.6 higher (0.32 lower to 1.52 higher)	VERY LOW

<sup>1</sup> One arm had immediate syringing, the other had after three days

<sup>2</sup> 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

<sup>3</sup> Downgraded by 1 increment if the confidence interval crossed one MID or by 2 increments if the confidence interval crossed both MIDs