

# Earaches Visualized

A common problem in children and adults, earache can cause intense pain, drainage from the canal, and sometimes hearing loss. What do these otoscopic views reveal?

**Match the diagnosis to the photo by letter**

- a. Otitis media with effusion
- b. Acute otitis externa
- c. Cholesteatoma
- d. Foreign object
- e. Acute otitis media

These cases were adapted from Usatine R, Smith M, Mayeaux EJ, et al, eds. *Color Atlas of Family Medicine*. 2nd ed. New York, NY: McGraw-Hill; 2013. You can now get the second edition of the *Color Atlas of Family Medicine* as an app for mobile devices by visiting [usatinemedia.com](http://usatinemedia.com).



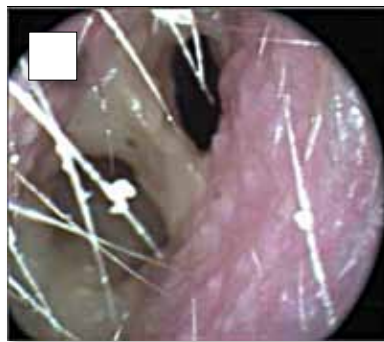
1. A 30-year-old woman complained of drainage from her ear for the past three months. She admitted that her hearing was diminished in that ear. She had a history of recurrent ear infections since childhood.



2. A 2-year-old child was brought for a well-child exam two months after an episode of acute otitis media. He appeared healthy and was meeting all of his developmental milestones. An otoscopic examination revealed air-fluid levels in the right ear.



3. A 15-month-old boy was brought in with a two-day history of fever, irritability, and frequent tugging on his left ear. The week before, he had nasal congestion, cough, and rhinorrhea. On otoscopy, his left tympanic membrane (TM) appeared erythematous, cloudy, and bulging. The TM failed to move on pneumatic otoscopy.



4. A 72-year-old man sought treatment for an earache in his left ear. He said that the pain began when he got a new "in the canal" hearing aid for his left ear a month earlier.



5. Parents brought their 3-year-old daughter to an urgent care facility because she had been crying all day. The child was irritable, had scant otorrhea, and had been pulling on her right ear.

For the correct answers, go to [www.clinicianreviews.com/articles/picture-this.html](http://www.clinicianreviews.com/articles/picture-this.html).

All photos reprinted from the *Color Atlas of Family Medicine*, 2nd ed. Figure 1 is courtesy of Vladimir Zlinsky, MD. In: Roy F. Sullivan, PhD. *Audiology Forum: video otoscopy*, [www.rcsullivan.com](http://www.rcsullivan.com); Figure 2, courtesy of Frank Miller, MD; Figures 3 and 5, courtesy of William Clark, MD; and Figure 4, courtesy of Dr. Roy F. Sullivan.