

Understanding Ear Infections

Over 110 million prescriptions for antibiotics were written last year.

Experts say that up to half were unnecessary or ineffective. That means approximately 55 million prescriptions were taken, often times by our children to treat ear infections, which were unfortunately useless!

Acute otitis media (AOM) is defined as, "fluid in the middle ear accompanied by signs or symptoms of ear infection."

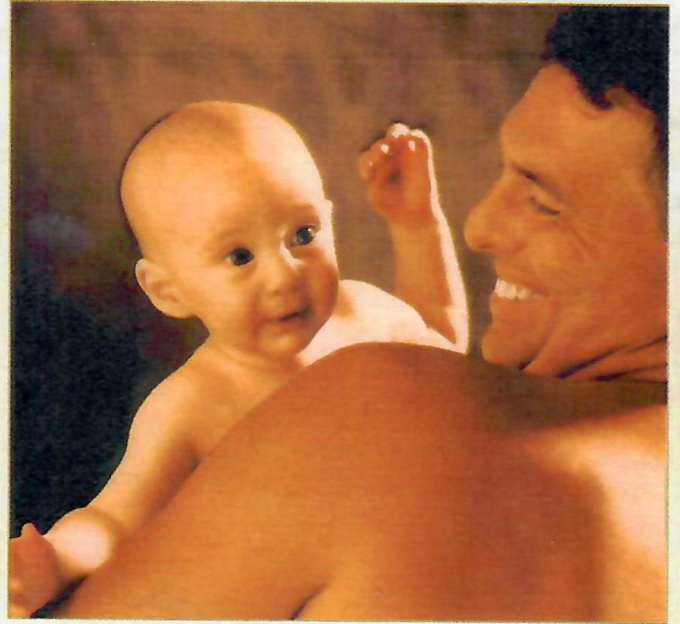
Although uncertainty exists among experts as to the best solution for treating AOM, antibiotics continue to be a first line of defense for the medical profession.

Recent research is beginning to reveal the ineffectiveness of antibiotics to treat this illness. In fact, the *New England Journal of Medicine* reported, "Only 1 in 8 children with ear infections benefit from antibiotics, and researchers found that most subjects who received placebo recovered just as quickly as subjects taking prescription antibiotics." The study continued, "Within one week 81% of placebo subjects had recuperated."

Of most importance, however, was how the lead author of this study, Dr. J. Owen Hendley, shared these same concerns about prescription side effects and antibiotic resistance that chiropractors and other holistic health-care professionals have worried about for decades. He advised physicians to prescribe antibiotics for ear infections sparingly, and suggested that practitioners wait 48 to 72 hours before administering drugs as ear infections often mend on their own.



The *Journal of the American Medical Association (JAMA)* also found that "amoxicillin is not effective..." and, "...concluded that children who took the drug for ear infections were two to six times more likely to have a recurrence of their fluid build up." Despite this information, amoxicillin still remains the number one prescribed drug for ear infections. JAMA also found that only 58% of all myringotomies (tubes in the ears) were necessary.



Many studies have shown the strong connection between neuromusculoskeletal dysfunction of the Eustachian tube (a tube that "drains" the ear) and middle ear infections. Nerve interference caused by vertebral subluxations in the upper part of the neck can lead to improper functioning of the Eustachian tube. Specific chiropractic spinal adjustments reduce the nerve interference, improving the function of the Eustachian tube, and allow the middle ear to heal naturally.

Reference:

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