Swimmer’s Ear (External Otitis)

Swimmer’s ear (external otitis) is an infection of the outer canal of the ear. Ear canals are meant to be dry, so when water gets into the ear canal, it can become swollen. This makes it easier to get infections.

Signs of an Infection in the Outer Ear Canal:

- Itchy and painful ear
- Ear feeling plugged
- Pain when the ear is moved up and down
- Pain when the ear is pushed in
- Drainage from the ear

Treatment:
Your child has been given _______________________ ear drops. Give _______ drops every _______ hours as directed. (See "Ear Drops" CARE CARD.)

You may give your child acetaminophen (Tylenol®) or ibuprofen (Motrin®) for pain. Be sure to follow the instructions on the package for the amount to give based on your child’s age and weight. Do not give more than 5 doses of acetaminophen or 4 doses of ibuprofen in 24 hours.

Keep your child’s ears dry when bathing or washing hair.

Do not let your child swim until the infection has cleared. If there is drainage, keep your child’s skin clean and dry. (Wash the skin around the ear with warm soap and water. Rinse and dry completely).

Call your child’s doctor or the Children’s Mercy Hospital Information Line at (816) 234-3188 if:

- Your child has a fever greater than 101.5˚ F (38.6˚ C).
- The outer ear becomes red and swollen.
- You can feel a swollen area or bump behind your child’s ear.
- The ear infection is not getting better after 3 days of ear drops.

Special Instructions: