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Exclusion Criteria:

- Less than 60 days of age with fever ([Febrile Infant CPG](#))

Special Considerations:

- Anatomic abnormalities (including cleft palate)
- Genetic conditions with craniofacial abnormalities (such as Down Syndrome)
- Presence of cochlear implants
- Immune deficiencies

Criteria for diagnosis of AOM:

Middle ear effusion **PLUS** one of the following:

- Moderate/severe bulging of TM ([image](#))
- Mild bulging of TM and 48 hours of otalgia
- Mild bulging of TM ([image](#)) and intense erythema of the TM
- New onset otorrhea **NOT** caused by otitis externa

Non-Severe Symptoms:

- Mild otalgia <48 hours **AND**
- Temperature < 39°C (102.2°F)

Severe Symptoms:

- TM perforation
- Moderate/severe otalgia **OR**
- Otalgia ≥ 48 hours **OR**
- Temperature ≥ 39°C (102.2°F)

Watchful waiting / Safety-Net Antibiotic Prescription (SNAP):

- Joint decision between provider and caregiver
- Emphasize appropriate pain control
- Must have close follow-up (within 48-72 hours) if SNAP not given
- Must be able to fill prescription if signs/symptoms worsen or fail to improve in 48-72 hours

Education Handouts:

- Otorrhea with Tubes
- Otorrhea with Tubes (Spanish)
- Otorrhea without tubes
- Otorrhea without tube (Spanish)
- Watchful Waiting
- Watchful Waiting (Spanish)
- SNAP Flyer for Providers
- SNAP Visual Aid

Pt presents with concern for acute ear infection

Does pt have drainage?

No

Patient may have
Otitis Media
with Effusion
(image)
No antibiotics recommended

Does the pt have AOM?

Yes

What is the pt's severity of symptoms?

Non-severe

What is the pt's age?

6-24 months

Severe

Presence of tympanostomy tubes?

No

AOM with TM perforation (image)?

No

Does Pt. have Otitis Externa?

No

Consider alternative diagnosis (e.g. foreign body)

Treatment of AOM with tympanostomy tube

Initiate topical and oral antibiotics

Treatment of Otitis Externa

Consider watchful waiting or Safety-Net Antibiotic Prescription (SNAP)

Is the infection bilateral?

AOM Immediate Antibiotics

Abbreviations/Acronyms (lab, radiology excluded):

pt = patient

AOM = Acute Otitis Media

TM = Tympanic membrane