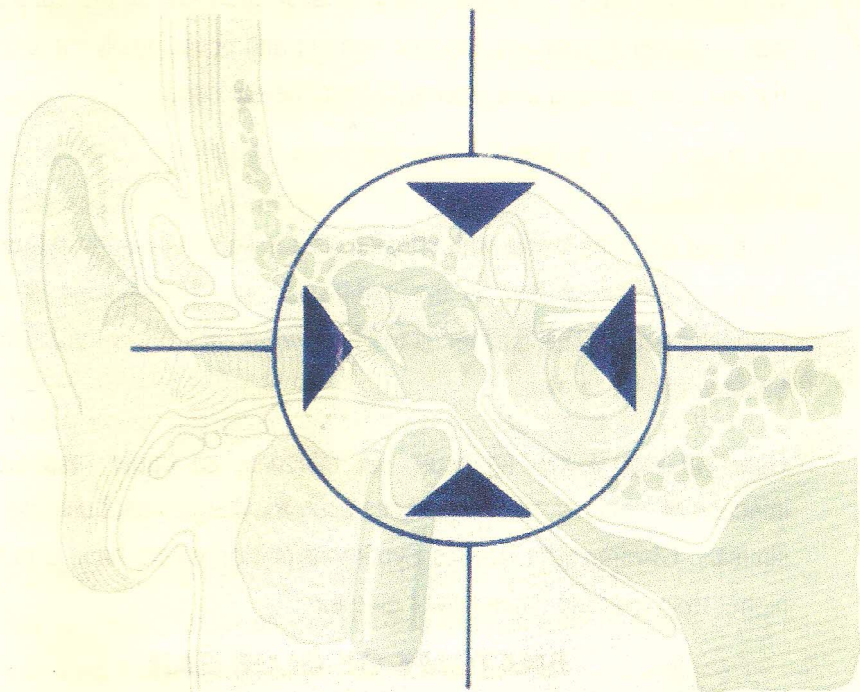


# UNDERSTANDING YOUR CHILD'S EAR INFECTION AND 'GLUE EAR'

## PATIENT INFORMATION BOOKLET



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A middle ear infection or Otitis Media is a collection of pus in the middle ear space. The middle ear occupies a confined space behind the eardrum with its only exit a connection to the back of the nose, known as the Eustachian tube (see diagram). If the Eustachian tube swells acutely during an upper respiratory tract infection (for example) then infected fluid may be trapped in the middle ear and form an abscess, which is pus under pressure. This will cause pressure on the eardrum with pain, fever, irritability, blocked hearing and occasionally rupture of the eardrum, leading to a discharge from the ear canal.

### What is 'Glue ear'?

Glue ear or, Otitis Media with effusion as it is known in medical terms, is the collection of fluid in the middle ear due to blockage of the Eustachian tube. This fluid tends to be watery at first but eventually can become thick, like glue.

Glue ear may follow an acute ear infection, an upper respiratory infection or 'cold', or other conditions such as allergic nasal disease or sinusitis. Children with Down's Syndrome or cleft palate have a much higher than average incidence of glue ear.

### ANATOMY OF GLUE EAR

