

Mayo Clinic Minute

Stop cleaning your ears

VIDEO	AUDIO
	Bobby pins, car keys, paper clips, cotton swabs – all things that should not be in your ears.
	<i>Sound of a buzzer</i>
	Yes, even cotton swabs. In fact, the American Academy of Otolaryngology says don't put anything smaller than your elbow in your ears.
Title: KARTHIK BALAKRISHNAN, M.D. OTORHINOLARYNGOLOGY Mayo Clinic	It feels good, and you see some wax on whatever you put in your ear. So you feel like you got it out.
.	But Mayo Clinic otolaryngologist Dr. Karthik Balakrishnan says putting this or anything else in your ear canal does more harm than good.
	You're pushing most of the wax in deeper.
	Dr. Balakrishnan says most people's ears do a good job of self-cleaning, so only the outside of the ear needs attention.
	It's totally fine to use a Q-tip to clean the outside of the ear. But don't put anything into the ear hole.
Graphic: Plugged ears Muffled hearing Discomfort Itching	If your ears become plugged and your hearing is muffled, or if you have discomfort or prolonged itching, see a doctor.
	There are some people who do have problems with very dry wax or very sticky wax that doesn't work its way out. Then, it's appropriate to see a physician or health care provider to get that cleaned out. But don't try to do it yourself.
Graphic: newsnetwork.mayoclinic.org	For the Mayo Clinic News Network, I'm Jeff Olsen.