

Maintenance and cleaning of in-the-ear hearing aids

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Some brief advice on how to maintain and clean CIC and ITE hearing aids



This is the sixth in a series of brochures from Widex on hearing and hearing-related matters.

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high definition hearing

Maintenance

A hearing aid is a valuable device that needs to be handled with care. Thanks to today's digital technology it is possible to produce very small and sophisticated in-the-ear (ITE) and even smaller completely-in-canal (CIC) hearing aids. However, it is always important to clean and maintain a hearing aid properly to obtain its full benefit; not only to gain the optimum performance from the hearing aid, but also to prolong its life.





Treat your hearing aid with care and do not expose it to knocks or excessive pressure. A good tip is to lean over a table when inserting and removing your hearing aid to reduce the dropping distance, as it could be damaged if it falls onto a hard floor.

When you are not using your hearing aid, turn it off, remove the battery and put it into its storage case out of the reach of children and pets.



Hearing aids should never be exposed to high temperatures or moisture. Consequently there are situations where you should not wear hearing aids, such as while showering or swimming, during radiation treatment, or when using a hair dryer, hair spray or other sprays.

Cleaning

Whatever the type of hearing aid, water or other fluids should not be used to clean it. Instead, clean the surfaces of the hearing aid with a soft, dry cloth and use the special brush and tool supplied with the aid to clean around the sound outlet, microphone opening and vent.

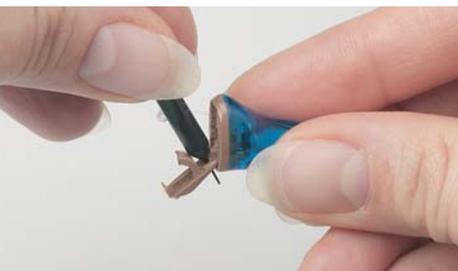
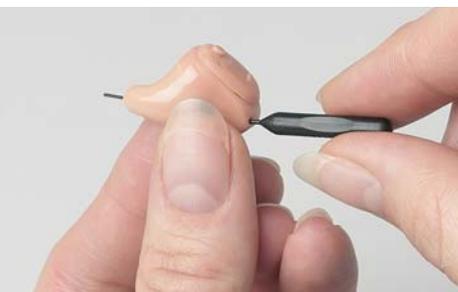
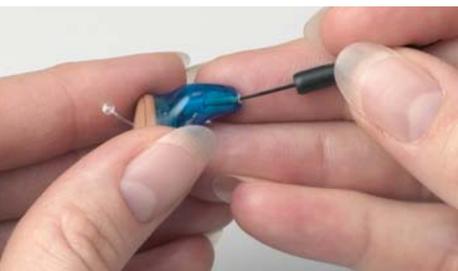
Hearing aids are extremely susceptible to problems caused by earwax. Even a small amount of earwax can cause hearing aids to malfunction. Hearing aids that are worn in the ear canal naturally come in contact with earwax and therefore usually require more frequent cleaning.

It is a good idea to check your hearing aid for wax and dirt every time you remove it from your ear. Cleaning your hearing aid should become a part of your daily routine – just like brushing your teeth.

The sound outlet

If earwax has accumulated around the sound outlet, remove it with the cloth or the small brush supplied with your hearing aid. If you let the wax dry overnight first, it will be easier to remove.





The vent

Some Widex **CIC instruments** are fitted with a special short vent tube, whose opening can usually be seen near to the sound outlet.

The wax-removing tool for a Widex CIC hearing aid has a long and a short end. There is a tiny ball at the tip of the longer end, which is used for clearing this vent. Insert the long end of the wax-removing tool into the opening of the vent near the tip of the aid (i.e. the end opposite the battery drawer, as illustrated). We recommend that you first open the battery drawer and remove the battery. Then turn the hearing aid so that the open battery drawer is facing downwards, to allow any earwax to be pushed out through the hearing aid. If your CIC hearing aid is equipped with a full-length vent that goes all the way through the shell of the hearing aid, pass the long wax-removing tool available for this type of vent completely through the vent.

Important: Do not insert anything into the sound outlet.

Most **ITE instruments** have a full-length vent that goes all the way through the shell of the hearing aid. To clean the vent, use the long wax-removing tool and pass it completely through the vent as shown in the photo.

The microphone opening

For CIC instruments use the short end of the wax-removing tool to remove any wax that has accumulated around the microphone opening on the battery drawer. Open the bat-

tery drawer and remove the battery. Turn the hearing aid so that the open battery drawer is facing downwards. Guide the short end of the wax-removing tool through the microphone opening on the battery drawer from the inside as illustrated. This should be done every day after wearing the hearing aid.

Important: Do not insert anything into the microphone itself.

On some ITE instruments a grid covers the microphone opening. In this case, the small brush should be used for cleaning around the microphone opening as shown in the photo. If your ITE model does not have a microphone grid, the wax-removing tool should be used, as shown in the photo.

Wax guard

A wax guard is a special type of filter, which is placed in the sound outlet and is usually designed to be exchanged by the wearer. The filter helps to prevent wax and dirt from entering the sound channel. If your hearing aid is provided with a wax guard it is important to remove any wax or dirt that has accumulated around it. Use the soft cloth or the small brush for this purpose. As people produce different amounts of earwax, some hearing aid users will have to change the wax guard quite often, while others perhaps only every other week. Whether your hearing aid is equipped with a wax guard or not, you should never insert anything into the sound outlet. Even with careful cleaning, wax and dirt can become lodged in the hearing aid and cause it to malfunction. Often this takes the form of the aid sounding weak, distorted or dead. If this happens, return the hearing aid to your dispensing centre for service.





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