

but recommendations for earplugs are inconsistent. However, lake and river water is potentially contaminated, and wearing earplugs while swimming in a lake or non-chlorinated pools prevents flooding of the external canal and possible infection ([Rosenfeld, Schwartz, Pynnonen, et al, 2013](#)). Bathwater and shampoo water should be kept out of the ear, if possible, because soap reduces the surface tension of water and facilitates entry through the tube ([Rosenfeld, Schwartz, Pynnonen, et al, 2013](#)). Parents should be aware of the appearance of a grommet (usually a tiny, plastic spool-shaped tube) so that they can recognize it if it falls out. They are reassured that this is normal and requires no immediate intervention, although they should notify the practitioner.

Prevention of recurrence requires adequate education regarding antibiotic therapy. The symptoms of pain and fever usually subside within 24 to 48 hours, but nurses must emphasize that all of the prescribed medication should be taken. Parents should be aware that potential complications of OM, such as hearing loss, can be prevented with adequate treatment and follow-up care.

Parents also need anticipatory guidance regarding methods to reduce the risks of OM, especially in children younger than 2 years old. Reducing the chances of OM is possible with measures such as sitting or holding an infant upright for feedings, maintaining routine childhood immunizations, and exclusively breastfeeding until at least 6 months old. Propping bottles is discouraged to avoid pooling of milk while the child is in the supine position and to encourage human contact during feeding. Eliminating tobacco smoke and known allergens is also recommended. Early detection of middle ear effusion is essential to prevent complications. Infants and preschool children should be screened for effusion, and all schoolchildren, especially those with learning disabilities, should be tested for hearing deficits related to a middle ear effusion.

Infectious Mononucleosis

Infectious mononucleosis is an acute, self-limiting infectious disease that is common among young people under 25 years old.

Symptoms include fever, exudative pharyngitis, lymphadenopathy, hepatosplenomegaly, and an increase in atypical lymphocytes. The course is usually mild but occasionally can be severe or, rarely,