# **Earache pathway**





## Clinical support tool for remote clinical assessment

Clinical findings	Green – low risk	Amber – intermediate risk	Red – high risk
Colour Activity	<ul> <li>Normal colour of skin, lips and tongue</li> <li>Responds normally to social cues</li> <li>Content/smiles</li> <li>Stays awake or wakens quickly</li> <li>Strong normal cry/not crying</li> </ul>	Pallor     Reduced response to social cues     Wakes only after prolonged stimulation     Infant (under 1 year) not feeding     Very distressed	<ul> <li>Blue or grey colour</li> <li>Unable to rouse or if roused does not stay awake</li> <li>Clinical concerns about nature of cry (Weak, high pitched or continuous)</li> </ul>
Respiratory	None of amber or red symptoms	<ul> <li>RR 50-60 breaths/min if aged &lt;12 months</li> <li>RR 40-50 breaths/min if age 1-5 years</li> <li>RR 25-30 breaths/min if age 6 -11 years</li> <li>RR 20-25 breaths/min if age ≥12 years</li> <li>Mild/moderate respiratory distress</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Grunting or severe respiratory distress</li> <li>RR &gt;60 breaths/min if aged &lt;12 months</li> <li>RR &gt;50 breaths/min if age 1-5 years</li> <li>RR &gt;30 breaths/min if age 6 -11 years</li> <li>RR &gt;25 breaths/min if age ≥12 years</li> </ul>
Circulation / hydration	None of amber or red symptoms	Cold hands and feet in absence of fever     Reduced urine output     Not tolerating fluids	
Other	None of amber or red symptoms	<ul> <li>Pus discharging from ear</li> <li>Pain waking child from sleep</li> <li>Child under 2 years with bilat earache</li> <li>Swelling or redness behind the ear</li> <li>Dizziness or losing their balance</li> <li>Age 3-6 months with temp ≥39° (102.2°F) with no clear focus of infection</li> <li>Fever for ≥ 5 days</li> <li>Additional parental/carer support required</li> <li>Lower threshold for face to face review if significant chronic co-morbidities</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Age 0-3 months with temp ≥38° (100.4°F)</li> <li>Meningism (severe headache, neck stiffness, photophobia, irritability)</li> <li>Seizure</li> </ul>



#### **Green Action**

Provide earache safety netting advice sheet

Confirm they are comfortable with the decisions/ advice given

Always consider safeguarding issues



#### **Amber Action**

For face to face review (consider if video consultation is appropriate).

If timely clinical review cannot be facilitated in primary care, low threshold for referral to ED.



### **Red Action**

Refer immediately to emergency care – consider whether 999 transfer or parent/taxi most appropriate based on clinical acuity etc.

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