

Swimmer's ear is an occupational hazard for swimmers. It's an even bigger problem for divers. Although divers spend less time in the water, the depths to which they dive force more water into their ear canals. Water softens and denudes the ear canal of its protective covering. It becomes a sanctuary for germs.

Swimmer's ear often begins as an itch. If attention is not promptly forthcoming, it progresses to pain and gunky discharge. A couple of tips can furnish a degree of protection against ear infections.

Prepare a solution with equal parts of rubbing alcohol and white vinegar. After each session, use an eyedropper to put a few drops of the alcohol-vinegar solution into one ear. Let them stay there for a couple of minutes. Then tilt your head to one side so the drops drain from the ear. Repeat the procedure with the other ear.

Alcohol dries the ear canal, and vinegar wards off germs.

Don't dry your ears with cotton swabs. They remove the ear canal's protective coating.