

SECTION: NURSING SERVICES

POLICY #: 411 EAR CHECK

POLICY: Central Valley Health District RN will conduct ear checks to assess for possible ear abnormality.

PROCEDURE:

1. Client will be individually assessed for symptoms and other pertinent information to include past history of ear problems, meds, tubes, fever, etc. Inspect the auricle and surrounding tissues for deformities, lumps and skin lesions. If ear pain, discharge or inflammation is present, check for tenderness by moving the auricle and pressing on the tragus and mastoid process.
2. Explain procedure to client.
3. An adult will be asked to assist in restraining a child as necessary, such as positioning child on an adult's lap with child's head against adult's chest or lying on exam table with arms restrained.
4. Otoscope will be used to examine the ear canal and tympanic membrane using largest specula that the ear canal will accommodate.
5. Lift ear up and back for older children and adults, down and back for smaller children to aid visualization of the canal and tympanic membrane.
6. Identify wax, discharge or foreign bodies in the ear canal. Note any redness or swelling of the canal.
Gently move the speculum, so you can see the entire drum, identify the landmarks.
7. Refer to Bates, [A Guide to Physical Examination](#), page 63, and/or Hauke, [Ear Disease](#), for abnormalities of the eardrum. Referrals will be made if any of the abnormalities are suspected.
8. Document findings upon completion of exam with SOAP format.
9. Refer to physician, if any abnormality identified.