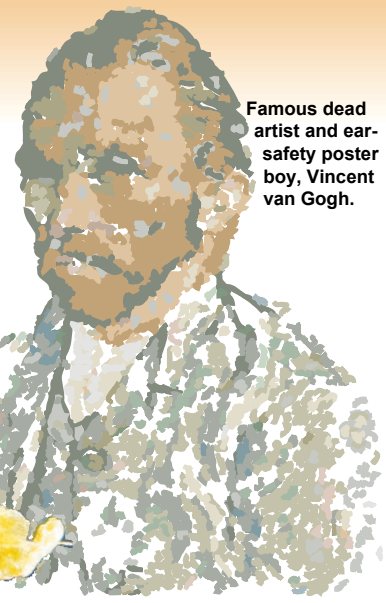
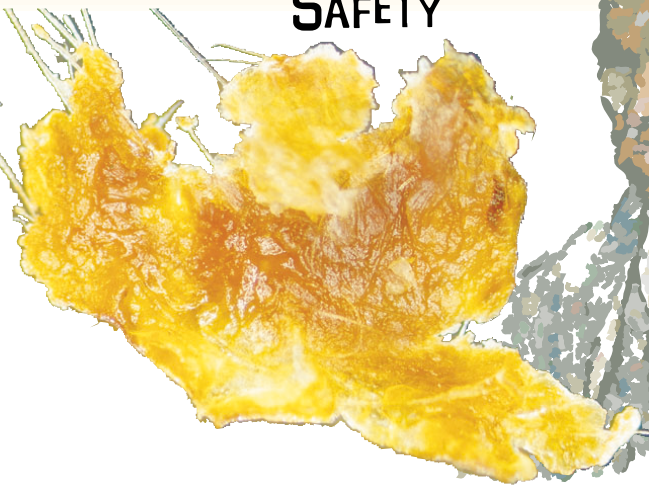


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# EARS, OILS AND SAFETY



Famous dead artist and ear-safety poster boy, Vincent van Gogh.

Dear David & Marisa,  
Why something happens is a very tough question. It's like all cosmic to talk about *why things happen*. The purpose of ear wax in the universe I can't guess. But I can easily tell you what its job is in your body. It's protection.  
Every place your body opens up to the outside world is protected by something to trap the gunk, gunk and schmutz that want to get inside our bodies and pollute them.

*Jax Place*  
Jax Place

## experiment #1

**WHAT YOU NEED:** Ear wax - newspaper - water - butter

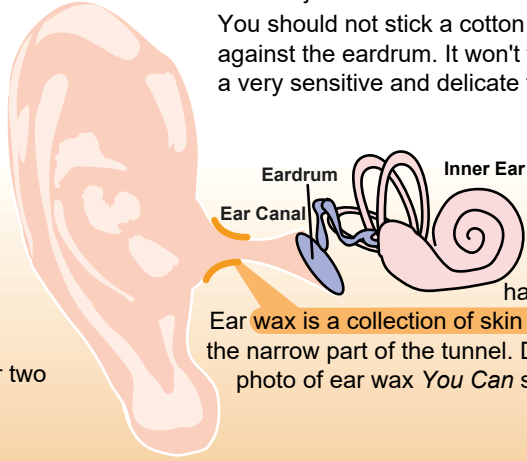
**WHAT TO DO:**

The next time your ears get cleaned, smear a bit of the gross stuff onto a white piece of newspaper. Do the same thing with a drop of water and a bit of butter on other pieces of newspaper. Let them dry for an hour or two and then look at them again. Any difference?

**SO WHAT:**

Ear wax is thickened skin oils. It will grease up the newspaper

Your ear canal is a self-cleaning system. When left alone, the ear canal oozes out thick oils, which then catch junk and schmutz. That hardens the oils into waxy chunks that will just fall out on their own.  
You should not stick a cotton swab into your ear. That would pack down the wax against the eardrum. It won't fall out, and you're in danger of hurting your eardrum – a very sensitive and delicate thing.



and won't evaporate like the water. It'll make a greasy *stain* on the newspaper, like the butter. The tunnel that's open to the world from your ear has curved walls. It gets narrow in the middle. Ear wax is a collection of skin oils that ooze out of the walls of this tunnel. It coats the narrow part of the tunnel. Dust and gunk get caught in it. In the microscopic photo of ear wax *You Can* see that it has trapped dust, hair and gunk.

