Priority Topic: **EARACHE**

**Key Features:**

For a single article on this topic: *Otalgia AAFP 2018*

but you should also study AOM: *Otitis Media Diagnosis and Treatment AAFP 2013*

1. Make the diagnosis of otitis media (OM) only after **good visualization of the eardrum** (i.e., wax must be removed), and when **sufficient changes are present in the eardrum**, such as bulging or distorted light reflex (i.e., not all red eardrums indicate OM).

   **Clinical Tip:** spend some time looking at Google Images of AOM!

**What you should study:**

✓ AOM in children AAFP 2017
✓ Otitis Media Diagnosis and Treatment AAFP 2013
✓ AOM Summary CPS Position Statement 2016

2. Include pain **referred from other sources** in the differential diagnosis of an earache (eg. Tooth abscess, trigeminal neuralgia, TMJ dysfunction, pharyngitis, etc.).

3. Consider **serious causes** in the differential diagnosis of an earache (eg. tumors, temporal arteritis, mastoiditis).

**Differential Diagnosis**

**What you should study:**

✓ Otalgia AAFP 2018
4. In the treatment of otitis media, explore the possibility of not giving antibiotics, thereby limiting their use (e.g., through proper patient selection and patient education because most otitis media is of viral origin), and by ensuring good follow-up (e.g., reassessment in 48 hours).

**What you should study:**
✓ Otitis Media Diagnosis and Treatment AAFP 2013

5. Make rational drug choices when selecting antibiotic therapy for the treatment of otitis media. (Use first-line agents unless given a specific indication not to.)

**What you should study:**
✓ Traitement d’otite chez les enfants INESSS 2016 (English version online)

6. In patients with earache (especially those with otitis media), recommend appropriate pain control (oral analgesics).

**What you should study:**
✓ AOM Summary CPS Position Statement 2016 (just says to use tylenol/advil)

7. In a child with a fever and a red eardrum, look for other possible causes of the fever (i.e., do not assume that the red ear is causing the fever).*

**What you should study:**
✓ Otitis Media Diagnosis and Treatment AAFP 2013

8. Test children with recurrent ear infections for hearing loss.

**What you should study:**
✓ Surdité chez l’enfant MduQ

**Note:** *See the key features on fever.
Other issues that come up in clinic:

✓ La trompe d’Eustache MduQ 2017
✓ Cerumen Impaction AAFP 2017