

# Otoscopy images

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## Acute otitis media

The SIGN guideline on otitis media<sup>1</sup> found that 17 children need to be given antibiotics for one child to benefit from resolution of symptoms. A recent Cochrane review<sup>2</sup> gave the NNT as about 15. Another recent systematic review<sup>3</sup> including more studies of younger children suggests the NNT is eight. The clinical impact of antibiotic treatment in children under 2 years of age may be greater than in older children<sup>4</sup> but the frequency of adverse effects seen with antibiotics used to treat AOM may be as high as the NNT required to produce a clinical benefit.<sup>5</sup>

1. SIGN. *Diagnosis and management of childhood otitis media in primary care*. Report no 66. Edinburgh: Scottish Intercollegiate Guidelines Network, 2003. (<http://www.sign.ac.uk>)
2. Glasziou PP, Del Mar CB, Sanders SL, *et al*. Antibiotics for acute otitis media in children. *Cochrane Library*. Issue 2. Oxford: Update Software, 2003.
3. Takata GS, Chan LS, Shekelle P, *et al*. Evidence assessment of management of acute otitis media. 1. The role of antibiotics in treatment of uncomplicated acute otitis media. *Pediatrics* 2001;**108**:239–47.
4. Damoiseaux RAMJ, van Balen FAM, Hoes AW, *et al*. Primary care based randomised, double blind trial of amoxicillin versus placebo for acute otitis media in children aged under 2 years. *BMJ* 2000;**320**:350–4.

5. NZGG. *Acute otitis media. Meta-analysis*. Wellington: New Zealand Guidelines Group, 1998. (<http://www.nzgg.org.nz>)