

# Otolaryngology

## Fly and Dive Precautions

We understand that you are going to take a trip in the near future on an airplane and we understand that you have been having difficulty with pain and pressure in your ears. We have found the following treatment to be of help to prevent pain during descent. If you do not have any heart or kidney problems or hypertension then you should use **Afrin Nasal Spray in your nostril three times on each side, ONE HOUR BEFORE plane lands. Also take 30 mg of Sudafed ONE HOUR BEFORE the plane lands.** Both of these medications can be bought over the counter in a drugstore or pharmacy

You should **NOT** fly or dive with an upper respiratory infection

### HOW DO YOU UNBLOCK YOUR EARS?

The act of swallowing activates the muscle that opens the Eustachian tube, the small tube that leads from the back of your nose to the inside of the ear and allows pressure to equalize. You swallow more often when you chew gum or let mints melt in your mouth. These are good practices especially just before and during descent. Yawning is even better. It is a strong activator of that muscle. Be sure to avoid sleeping during descent, because you may not be swallowing enough to keep up with the pressure changes.

If yawning and swallowing are not effective, the most forceful way to unblock your ears is as follows:

1. Pinch your nostrils shut
2. Take a mouth full of air
3. Using your cheeks and throat muscles, force the air against your nose as if you are trying to blow your nose open
4. When you hear your ears pop, you have succeeded
5. You may have to repeat this several times during descent

Babies cannot intentionally pop their ears but may also do so if they are sucking a bottle or pacifier. Feed your baby, and do not allow him/her to sleep during descent.

We hope this helps you with your discomfort and allows for a safe and painless flight. Please feel free to contact us with any questions, concerns or problems that may arise during your trip



**ENTC of Nevada**

Otolaryngology  
702-792-6700  
[www.entc.com](http://www.entc.com)