

Safe Support Technique for Patient/Client Safety

Complete control over the process of introducing any instrument or tool into the ear canal is paramount to patient/client safety. Instruments that you may insert into the ear canal include but are not limited to: otoscope; earlight and tips; otoblock; impression material syringe or gun. Caution, skill, and training are required to reduce risk and ensure that the process is safe for patients/clients.

- Both hands and the instrument act as a unit and at least one hand must be in contact with the patient's/client's head at all times.
- One hand serves as the bridge/support and is placed on the side of patient's/client's head in proximity to the ear.
- One hand holds the instrument steady and is placed in either firm contact with the patient's/client's head or securely in contact with the non-instrument hand.
- This technique ensures that hands, head, and instrument act as a single unit to prevent accidental damage or injury to the ear.

Examples of acceptable safe support techniques are shown in the following photos.

Examples of Safe Support Techniques

Otoscope Handle Up



Note how the fingers of the hand holding the instrument support against the cheek, while the fingers of the other hand support against the head and also pull the pinna up for viewing.

Otoscope Handle Down



Again, the two hands perform the same support as in the previous example, though the positioning is slightly different.

Two-Fingered Support with an Impression Gun



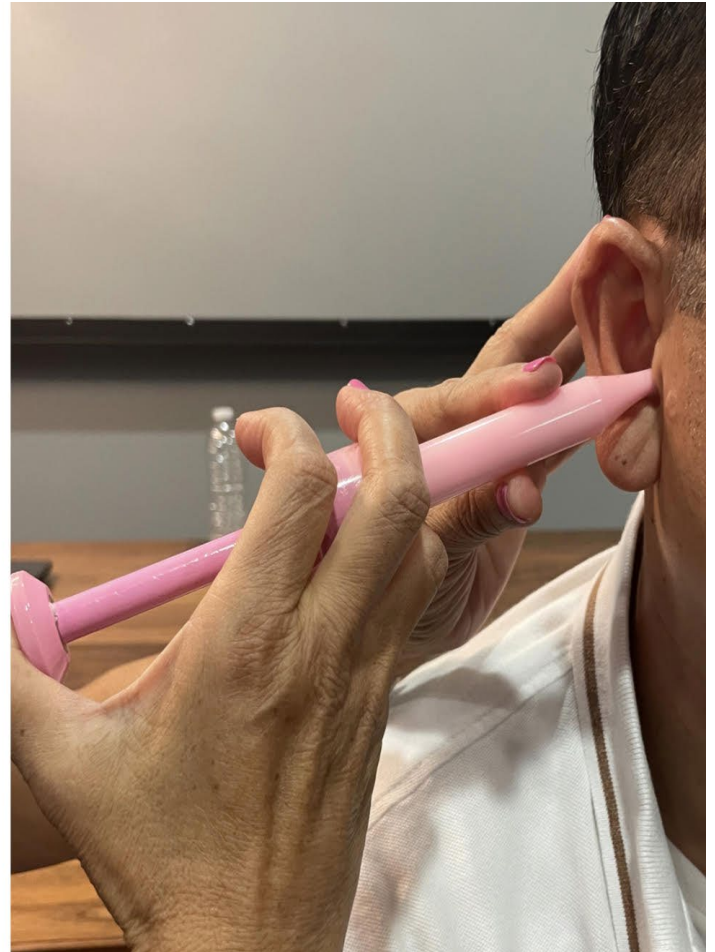
The hand must be in contact with the head at all times while the index finger and thumb are firmly gripping the nozzle of the impression gun or the end of the syringe. There should be no air in the tip of the syringe or gun.

Proper Support for Otoblock Placement



When supporting for insertion of an otoblock, the instrument hand holds the otolight and firmly places a finger against the cheek. The fingers of the non-instrument hand pull up on the pinna while supporting against the head above and behind the pinna.

Proper Support for Ear Impression with a syringe



The hand must be in contact with the head at all times while the index finger and thumb are firmly gripping the nozzle of the impression gun or the end of the syringe. There should be no air in the tip of the syringe or gun.