



Otoscopic Findings

Introduction

This page shows some of the common abnormalities that one can see when the eardrum is examined.

Normal Drums



The normal ear drum is translucent and casts back a light reflex from its antero-inferior quadrant. Often one can see middle ear structures through it.

Perforations



There is a hole in the centre of this eardrum and scattered blood clots. This perforation was caused by a slap on the ear.



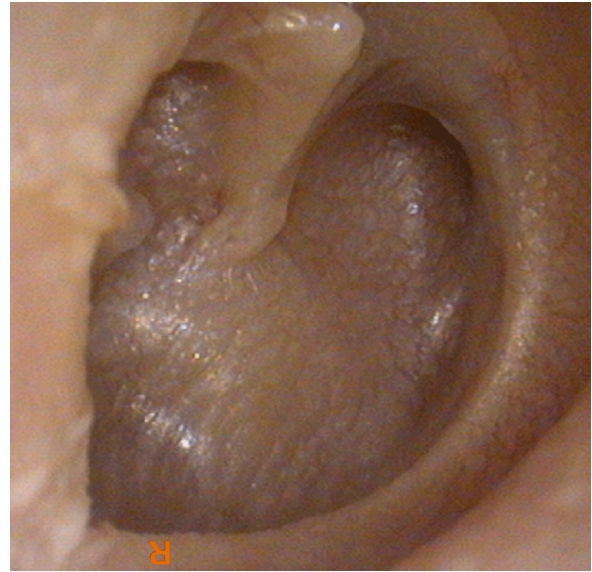
This left ear has a central perforation posteriorly. It is clean. There is tympanosclerosis anteriorly but this is not important.

Retractions



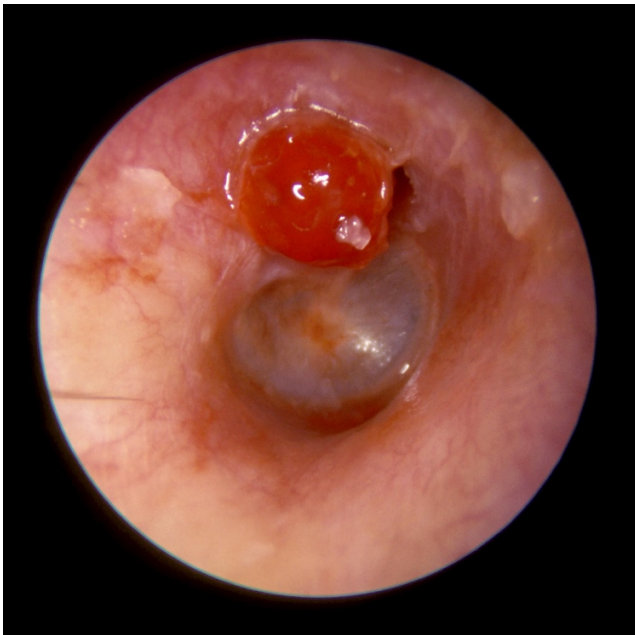
This drum shows a retraction in the attic. This is an area of the drum that has been sucked inwards by chronic negative middle ear pressure.

The neck of the malleus can be seen under the retraction. Such retractions may go on to become a cholesteatoma.



This drum is completely retracted. It has collapsed onto the promontory. The stapes head can just be seen posteriorly

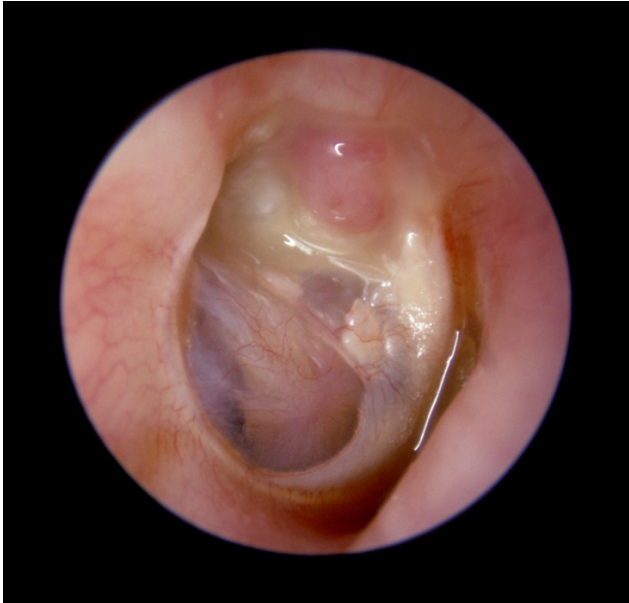
Cholesteatoma



1.



2.



3.



4.

These four images show the variety of presentations of a cholesteatoma. In 1. There is a small polyp in the attic of the right ear. Beneath this there will be a retraction pocket or a cholesteatoma. In 2. we can see a small crust in the attic and this will be hiding a retraction or a cholesteatoma. Image 3. shows a polyp and pus in the attic while 4. shows both an attic crust and the cholesteatoma behind the drum in the postero-superior quadrant.