

- eustachian tube = connects middle ear with the nasopharynx and allows passage of air.
- 3 functions (in previous part of study guide)

Inner ear

- embedded in bone
- bony labyrinth = holds the sensory organs for equilibrium & hearing
- vestibule & the semicircular canals compose the vestibular apparatus & cochlea
- cochlea = latin for snail shell / contains the central hearing apparatus

Hearing

- peripheral level: ear transmits sound & converts its vibrations into electrical impulses, which can be analyzed by the brain
- brainstem level: permits locating the direction of a sound in space as well as identifying the sound
- cerebral cortex level: interpret the meaning of the sound & begin the appropriate response

Cerumen: a yellow, waxy material that lubricates & protects the ear

- wax forms a sticky barrier that helps keep foreign bodies from entering & reaching the sensitive tympanic membrane
- moves out to the meatus by the movements of chewing & talking
- sticky, yellow discharge accompanies otitis externa or may indicate otitis media if the drum is ruptured
- impacted is common cause of conductive hearing loss

Position during otoscopic exam

- tilt the persons head slightly away from you
- pull the pinna up & back on an adult or older child; this helps straighten the S-shape of the canal
- pull pinna down on an infant & a child younger than 3 years
- hold gently but firmly