

Ear Pain with Dr. Jack Russo

[Music]

Hi, my name is Jack Russo and I'm an ear nose and throat doctor and head and neck surgeon at ENT and Allergy Associates in Brooklyn Heights.

When can ear pain be a sign of cancer?

Well, ear pain is commonly associated with an ear infection, but when you have ear pain on one side and your hearing is not decreased and the ear doesn't look abnormal on an exam, that can be a sign of something going on inside the throat, affecting the nerves going to the ear. That's something we call referred pain so the most common source of referred pain is inflammation or arthritis in the TMJ or temporomandibular joint and that sends a signal to the ear that makes it painful. A less common but more serious type of referred pain is from a tumor in the back part of the throat affecting those nerves, sending shooting pains into one ear. That's why it's very important if you have ear pain that lasts for more than a couple weeks that you seek evaluation with an ENT even if your primary doctor says that there's no signs of ear infection on your exam.

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