

dan facts

Practical dive safety tips for divers.

Ear Problems? No Problem.

Pressure-related injuries to divers' ears and sinuses are the most common injuries reported to DAN each year. A little common sense will help you avoid such injuries.

Equalize

Equalize early; start on the surface with a gentle Valsalva maneuver. At the first sign of a problem, stop your descent until you have equalized. If you cannot equalize, ascend to a shallower depth and use a different equalization technique.

Use frequent gentle equalizations; they are more effective than forceful equalization.

Avoiding Ear Problems

- Before entering the water or before descending, equalize.
- Descend slowly and steadily, and clear often.
- If you experience difficulty, stop your descent and do not forcefully clear. Stop your descent before you experience ear or sinus pain.
- Descend and equalize in a feet-first position.
- If you do experience pain or discomfort, ascend until you experience relief.
- Equalize early and often.

Can't equalize? Do you have a broken nose, a deviated septum, allergies or a history of ear infections? Don't dive until you have seen a doctor, and the problem is resolved. Use nasal sprays or oral medications to shrink swollen membranes and aid equalization.

Symptoms of damage to the ears and sinuses include:

- Ringing in the ears or hearing loss
- Nausea, vomiting, dizziness or vertigo
- Blood from the nose or ears
- Unresolved pain in ears or sinuses

If any of these symptoms occur during or after a dive, consult a physician before the next dive. Proper care and medication will aid your return to diving.

DAN Medical Information Line: +1-919-684-2948 ext. 222

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Divers Helping Divers™

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