

LEND US YOUR EAR!

'Tis the season to decorate your earlobes with long, dangling earrings. Such ear jewelry is certainly the rage, so it's not surprising that dermatological surgeons are seeing more cases of often painful earlobe tears.

Here are some tips on how to prevent such tears from Dr. Peter Vignjevic, a dermatologist and an assistant professor at McMaster University in Hamilton.

- Choose lighter or less elaborate earrings, which are less likely to get caught on clothing or in your hair.
- Wear large earring backs, found at larger jewelry and accessories stores, to support and help protect the ears.
- Remove earrings when you're in the shower, in bed or when playing with small children, who might tug at them.
- Be careful when removing a hat; tugging too hard can cause your earlobes to tear.

If your earlobe does tear, Vignjevic recommends using a bandage and some Polysporin ointment, as well as keeping the area clean. You should also not wear earrings until the tear has been repaired. A dermatological surgeon can help reconstruct the lobe to its normal size and shape.

– Danielle Ng-See-Quan

