

Table 1. Differentiating Inner Ear Barotrauma (IEBT) and Inner Ear Decompression Sickness (IEDCS).

Injury	Sympton Onset	Dive Conditions	Associated Signs	Associated Symptoms
IEBT	Most often during descent. Can happen on ascent or just after surfacing.	Any depth, typically rapid descent.	Otorrhea, perforated TM, hemotympanum.	Otalgia, otorrhea, aural fullness, hyperacusis, epistaxis, history of ETD common. Tulio or Hennebert with perilymphatic fistula.
IEDCS	Occurs exclusively after ascent. Median time is 15 minutes after surfacing.	>10m, often rapid ascent. Worse with cold water or strenuous/repeated diving. More likely with depth > 20m, missed decompression stops, mixed gas air tanks.	Altered mental status, tremors, hemoptysis, blotchy rash (Cutis marmorata).	Pain/paresthesia in joints/extremities. Skin flushing/itching, constitutional symptoms (fatigue, urinary retention, SOB).