

Tympanostomy Tubes and Ear Infection Instructions

Postoperative Ear Tube Instructions

- Your child may return to normal activity, but please avoid vigorous play (wrestling, tackle football) for 1 week.
- If drops are prescribed, use them for the recommended duration. The drops may say they are for use in the eyes. These are also used as eardrops.
- If the drops cause severe pain, stop using the drops and contact us.
- After surgery, your child may have ear drainage for 3-4 days. This may even be blood tinged. Do not be alarmed, as this is normal. If after five to seven days the drainage persists, becomes very thick, or has a foul odor, please call our office.
- If in the future the ears begin to drain for more than a few days, begin using the prescribed eardrops twice daily for 1 week. If your child becomes very ill, or if the drainage persists longer than 1 week, contact our office.
- You may use a Q-tip to remove any visible drainage from the ear canal prior to using the drops.
- **Remember your return visit.** If you have any other questions or problems please call us at the office at 434-2255.

Ear Infections After Tubes

- Although uncommon, children can still get an ear infection (otitis media) with a functioning tube; Discharge from the ear canal is the most common symptom.
- Ear infections without discharge may also occur but usually resolve without treatment. Antibiotics are unnecessary unless your child is very ill or develops ear discharge. Ear discharge may be clear, cloudy, or foul smelling. Bloody discharge may occur if the middle ear is inflamed, but it is not a cause for alarm or excessive concern.
- If you notice a discharge from your child's ear:
 1. Clean the ear and outer canal as needed to keep the ear clean. A cotton ball may be used intermittently, but avoid using for prolonged periods of time.
 2. Prevent water entry into the ear canal during bathing or hair washing by using a small piece of cotton saturated with Vaseline to cover the opening.
 3. Do not allow your child to swim until the discharge stops.
- When ear discharge persists more than a few days, begin using prescribed eardrops twice daily in the affected ear for 1 week. If you do not have drops, call the office (434-2255). Oral antibiotics are not as effective as applying drops directly.
- Contact our office if the discharge persists longer than 7 days or tends to recur frequently.
- Ear discharge will not damage your child's ears or hearing.