

Ear Tube Removal - Post Operative Instructions

Surgery

Removing ear ventilation tubes with a patch placement involves a brief anesthesia, typically 5 minutes or less. Patients may be irritable for 15-45 minutes after surgery and most return to normal activity the same day. You may have nausea or vomiting, but it usually goes away by the evening of surgery without additional medication.

Medication

Most children do not need pain medications after this surgery; however, you may use regular Tylenol if you are concerned that your child is having pain. You may be prescribed drops to prevent blood from blocking the ear canal.

Effects of Surgery

- Children may tug at their ears, but this does not necessarily mean that he or she is in pain
- You may see a small amount of blood from the ears for the first day or 2. This is normal and usually comes from the edge of the eardrum where the tube was removed
- Low-grade fever may occur. Tylenol (either by mouth or rectally) can be used. If your child has a fever greater than 102° F and doesn't respond to Tylenol, call the doctor's office
- Children can return to normal activity, school, or daycare the day after surgery

Water Precautions

Do your best to keep the ear(s) dry after a tube is removed. You should use cotton in the ears covered with a coat of Vaseline, putty or custom earplug when bathing. You should avoid swimming until your follow-up appointment with your surgeon.

General Information

- Most eardrums heal within weeks after removing a pressure equalization tube. Once this is confirmed, you will be able to stop using water precautions
- Children will be seen about a month after surgery. Your child will only need additional follow-up if the eardrum hasn't healed by that appointment
- Some children are not used to feelings of pressure changes in the ear once the eardrum heals. It's normal to have popping/clearing of the ears. It is also normal to have some pressure with weather, season or altitude changes. For children who have had tubes for several years, these feelings are new to them and may be described as painful or uncomfortable. Some parents can mistake these complaints for an ear infection. If the child has other symptoms, such as a high fever and severe ear pain, call our office or your pediatrician for an appointment