



Specializing In Disorders of the Ear Nose & Throat

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POSTOPERATIVE CARE FOR VENTILATING TUBES

Insertion of middle ear ventilating tubes involves lancing the eardrum and placing a miniature plastic or metal tube in this incision. This tube allows air to enter behind the eardrum and temporarily replaces the function of the Eustachian tube. Almost immediately, hearing should return to normal.

POSTOPERATIVE CHECK-UP

Please come in to the office for a postoperative appointment 14-21 days following surgery. This visit is to determine that the tubes are functioning properly and to assess if any existing loss has resolved. Patients are regularly checked every four to six months to see that the tubes are still present. At times wax or crust can plug the tube and make it nonfunctional. Since approximately 25-35% of children will require a second set of tubes, I normally like to follow my patients even after the tubes have fallen out.

ACTIVITIES

Your child may return to school and normal activities the day after surgery.

Ear molds should be worn whenever there is a chance of water getting into the ear canals (such as bathing, showering, or washing hair).

Cotton soaked in baby oil or coated with Vaseline may also be used in the ear canal to make a water tight seal while bathing or showering.

When swimming, the ear molds should be worn with a racing type swim cap to prevent the molds from falling out. (This water is contaminated and may enter the middle ear through the opening in the tube carrying bacteria behind the eardrum).

Avoid swimming under water, jumping or diving into the water even with the molds. If your child will be swimming regularly, we suggest you have molds made to fit the ear. An impression is made by the audiologist and sent out where a permanent plastic mold is made. Insurance companies do not cover this cost. Wash the ear mold regularly with hand soap and hot water or wipe it with rubbing alcohol.

All other play and sports activity is allowed. The tubes cannot be dislodged by normal sports related contact.

DURING THE FIRST YEAR

With time your child's Eustachian tubes will grow to assume their normal function and there will no longer be the need to ventilate the middle ear. Ventilating tubes gradually migrate out of the eardrum and fall out of the ear canal like a piece of wax. This process occurs because the eardrum very slowly rejects the tube which is a foreign substance to the body. Rejection may occur anytime between six and twelve months surgery, although there are some tubes specifically designed to remain in the eardrum for many months or years. It is extremely important to arrange routine follow up visits every six months.

Allergy • Sinus • Snoring • Sleep Disorders • Hearing Loss • Dizziness • Cosmetic & Outpatient Surgery

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