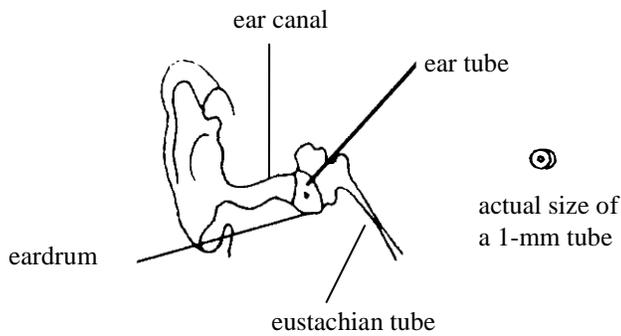


Ear tube surgery

Discharge instructions

What is ear tube surgery?

The surgeon makes a small hole in the eardrum. Fluid is removed from the middle ear and then a very small tube is inserted into the hole. This lets air into the middle ear space and prevents fluid from building up again.



What can I expect after surgery?

- low fever 99° to 100°F (37.3° to 37.8°C)
- thin, watery drainage (pink, clear, or yellow in color, or may be bloody) for 2 or 3 days
- earache on the day of surgery, caused by pressure changes in the ear and more sensitive hearing

How should I care for my child?

Your surgeon will recommend pain medicine for earache. Ear drops may be prescribed by your surgeon. Follow your Patient Discharge Summary sheet for how much to give, and how often.

Depending on your child's age and type of water exposure, ear plugs may or may not be needed. Talk to your doctor about the possible need for ear plugs.

Please follow any instructions on your child's Patient Discharge Summary sheet.

How active can my child be?

Your child may do quiet activities the day of surgery and then go back to regular activities. Regular activities will not dislodge the tubes.

What can my child eat?

Starting with a bland meal, your child may go back to his or her regular diet.

When should I call the doctor?

Call if you notice signs of an infection:

- yellow-green drainage from the ear
- bad smell from the ear
- temperature higher than 102° F (38.8° C) and not responding to Tylenol and cool compresses

What else do I need to know?

Avoid forceful nose blowing.

Airplane travel is all right because the ear tube equalizes the air pressure.

Ear tubes will not prevent all ear infections. But after surgery, your child's infections should be fewer and milder.

The ear tubes should fall out after 6 months to 2 years. When the tube comes out, the hole in the eardrum usually heals within a few weeks.

Questions?

This sheet is not specific to your child but provides general information. If you have any questions, please call your doctor.

Children's Hospitals and Clinics of Minnesota
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