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Post-Operative Instructions for Ear Tubes

Placement of ventilating ear tubes usually only requires the day of surgery for recovery. Children can plan on returning to school the next day and adults may return to work.

What to Expect:

1. The patient may note that sounds are much louder and may seem overly sensitive to sounds for a few days following the procedure. They will get used to normal sound with time.
2. Ear drainage – this may be thin fluid, pus like drainage, or even a little bloody. All of this is normal. The drops will slow and eventually stop the drainage. There is no need to clean the ears unless it is draining so much that crusting is noted on the outer ear. The doctor may clean the ears at your post-op visit if necessary.

Post-Operative Care

Diet:

Start with a clear liquid diet (Water; Juices-apple and grape, Sports Drinks – 10-K, Gatorade, Powerade; 7-UP or Sprite; Popsicles, or Jell-O) to prevent nausea and/or vomiting. Advance to a regular diet for age as tolerated.

Activity:

Do Not Get Water in Ears – including bath water. Getting water in the ears while tubes are present can lead to an infection. Various over the counter ear plugs may be used, cotton balls with Vaseline placed on the outside, Doc's Pro plugs or custom made ear plugs can be fitted in our office.

Bloody drainage is always alarming for any patient and their family. This is not unusual in the post-operative period, and can even happen later with the tubes in place. This usually is treated with prescription ear drops.

Any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to call. Thank you for your confidence in letting us care for you and your family.

For Ear Tubes:

Your doctor will check the tubes at routine intervals until they are out. As long as they are in: keep ears dry, do not submerge in pool or tub, do not put anything in the ears other than prescription ear drops. This includes: swimmers ear, alcohol, peroxide, wax drops, homeopathic ear drops, essential oils, olive oil, q-tipping, ear candling, or blowing smoke in the ear. Anything you put in the ear with tubes will sting or burn, even the prescription ear drops sting so are only used when necessary and as prescribed by your doctor.