

## MYRINGOTOMY TUBE PLACEMENT

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### “Ear Tubes”

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#### *Post operative instructions & What to expect*

You or your child will have myringotomy tubes (“ear tubes”) placed in the operating room. This will be performed under general anesthesia. It is important that you understand how to care for your child at home, and this information will help you in providing that care. Please bring this sheet with you on the day of surgery and go over it with your nurse. Remember, it is important that you follow these instructions carefully. Please feel free to ask any questions before going home.

#### **Before Surgery:**

- The patient must come to surgery on empty stomach. This means *NOTHING TO EAT OR DRINK AFTER MIDNIGHT THE NIGHT BEFORE SURGERY*. This includes all foods, all liquids, gum, candy, mints, etc.
- Surgery will be cancelled if the patient does not have a completely empty stomach.
- Please call the hospital the day before surgery between 8 am and 4 pm to get your arrival time.

#### **What to Expect**

- Your child will likely be upset and irritable immediately after surgery. Most children return to normal within a 4-12 hours. Most children are able to return to school/daycare the day after surgery.
- Immediately after surgery, you may see drainage from the ear canal. This drainage may continue for several days after surgery. The drainage may be clear, yellow, or bloody. This is normal, but should resolve with use of antibiotic ear drops. Use the prescribed ear drops as directed by the physician.
- Ear infections may occur after tubes are in place. (You may notice drainage or pus from the ears). To help prevent this, it is very important not to get dirty water in the ears (see instructions below under "Activity and Care.")
- A slight elevation in temperature is to be expected for the first 24 hours. It should not go above 101 degrees and it should not last more than 24 hours. If either occurs, notify your child's doctor.

#### **Activity and Care**

- For baths/showers, ear plugs are not required. Ear plugs are only required for swimming in pools if your head will be more than 3 feet underwater.
- Ear plugs should be used at all times while swimming in a lake, river or ocean or any type of "dirty" water.

- There are many types of ear plugs including silicone and plastic ear plugs available at your drug store and online
- Custom earplugs can be created, and swimming ear bands also work well.
- If you have concern for water exposure in your ears while swimming, try using one drop of the antibiotic drops before and one drop after swimming.

### **Diet**

- Don't feed your child solid food until you get home, as he/she may become nauseated.
- Begin with a clear diet and progress as tolerated back to a regular diet. If nausea and vomiting occur after starting and advancing diet, return to clear liquids for 12-24 hours. .

### **Medication**

- Discharge Medication: If your doctor prescribes them, use the ear drops as instructed.
- Put the ear drop bottle in your pocket for a few minutes before use to bring them up to body temperature, this will make them more comfortable to use.
- If there is drainage from the ear, try and clean away the drainage by twisting up the corner of a piece of toilet paper and wicking out the fluid. Repeat as needed.
- Use the drops as prescribed. After putting the drops down the ear canal, push on the tragus (the cartilage flap in front of the ear canal) several times to squeeze the drops through the tube.
- If drainage continues past the number of days prescribed, continue the drops until the drainage stops. If the drainage does not stop after 2 weeks, call the office.
- Save any leftover drops for future use.
- Children's Tylenol (acetaminophen) and Ibuprofen (Motrin or Advil) should be given for discomfort or fever, which is usually minimal.
- If drainage occurs after your post op appointment, begin the prescribed ear drops and call our office or your pediatrician. You should not permit your child to swim until after the infection has been resolved.

### **Follow Up Appointment:**

- If you do not have an appointment made for you at the time of surgery, please call the number above for a follow up appointment in 2-4 weeks after surgery to check on the tubes. Even if there is no drainage, it is important to have the tubes checked to make sure they are not blocked and are functioning properly.