



NASHVILLE EAR, NOSE & THROAT CLINIC

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MYRINGOTOMY WITH OR WITHOUT VENTILATION TUBE PLACEMENT

Pressure, fluid or infection may occur in the middle ear behind the ear drum, particularly when the eustachian tube is not functioning well. A small incision in the eardrum can be helpful to relieve this pressure, fluid, or infection. Depending upon your specific problem, the doctor may also choose to place a very small tube in the incision in order to keep the incision open for a longer period of time. This minor procedure usually only takes a few minutes and is performed with a small drop of local anesthetic. Small children are generally done under general anesthetic at the hospital as an outpatient.

Following this procedure it is best to keep the ears as dry as possible. Various physicians have individual preferences regarding swimming or bathing. You should not hesitate to ask your physician for his policies regarding getting water in the ears.

Hearing loss rarely occurs with a myringotomy. If it occurs at all it is generally temporary in nature. Ringing may also occur although this is uncommon. Likewise, dizziness is uncommon. If it occurs it generally resolves over a few days. Drainage can occur following tube insertion and is usually treated with ear drops. If an infection develops in an ear with a tube already in place, generally drainage will result. Again this is usually treated with ear drops and occasionally with both ear drops and oral antibiotics.

A perforation in the eardrum is a rare complication of myringotomy with tube placement. In very rare circumstances an incision in the eardrum may not heal and may require subsequent surgery. Generally tubes are placed in an incision in order to slow healing and keep the holes open for a longer period of time. Occasionally ear pain may occur after tube insertion. This is rarely severe and usually resolves within one to two days.

If you have any further questions regarding myringotomy with tube placement, please ask your physician during your office visit. Any other questions can generally be answered with a quick phone call.

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**HOME CARE INSTRUCTIONS FOLLOWING
MYRINGOTOMY WITH PLACEMENT OF TUBES**

DIET

Any good food is all right to eat.

ACTIVITY

Avoid vigorous activity the first 48 hours after surgery so the tube won't come out.

PRECAUTIONS

Do not clean the ear canal with cotton swabs or put anything else like your finger or a hair pin into the ear canal.

Do not get water in the ears. This means absolutely no swimming while the tubes are in place unless your physician has said it is ok.

You must also keep water out of the ears while washing hair. To do this, cover a cotton ball with a thin layer of petroleum jelly and put the cotton ball in the ear canal. This helps to form a protective seal.

If water does get in the ears, tilt head to the side so the water drains out of the wet ear. Place a dry towel to the ear to absorb the water. After the water drains out, use a blow dryer at a low, warm setting to gently blow over the wet ear to help evaporate the water. Call your physician.

EAR DRAINAGE

You may see a tiny amount of blood drainage from the ears for the first few days after the tubes are placed. This will quickly go away. It is normal and is no cause for concern.

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