



ALASKA FACIAL PLASTIC SURGERY & ENT  
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## **MYRINGOTOMY AND EAR TUBES**

### **PREPARING FOR SURGERY:**

- If your child gets a chest cold or fever during the 5 days before the surgery, please call the office at 907-671-6017. Your doctor may need to reschedule surgery for your child's safety.

### **WHAT TO EXPECT AFTER SURGERY:**

- When your child wakes up he/she may be upset, confused, nauseated, or dizzy from the anesthesia.
- The incision in the eardrum should not hurt. Loud noises may cause your child some discomfort at first. If your child is uncomfortable, you can give him or her Tylenol (acetaminophen).
- A low-grade fever of 99 - 100.2 degrees F is common for the first 24 hours. If your child's fever stays over 101.5 degrees F for 6-8 hours, call the office.
- You can expect a thin, pink, watery drainage from your child's ear. This is usual and may last up to 3 days. You may be asked to use antibiotic ear drops after surgery for the first 3-5 days. If the drainage becomes foul smelling, thick, yellow, green, or lasts longer than 5 days, please call the office.

### **WATER PRECAUTIONS:**

- Your child may bathe (If possible, do not let your child put his or her head under water), shower, and swim in a clean, chlorinated pool with proper precautions (use earplugs and wear a swim cap or swim band). However, do not swim in springs, lakes or oceans. They should NOT dive or swim more than 3 feet under the surface. Diving more than 3 feet underwater may result in water entering the middle ear through the tube, possibly leading to discomfort and/or an ear infection.
- Try to keep excess water and shampoo from getting into the ear canals (use cotton balls sealed with Vaseline or use earplugs to keep water out of the ear). If the ear canals feel wet after showering or swimming, you may use a hair dryer blown over the ear to help dry the ear canal. DO NOT use or insert anything, such as Q-tip, into your child's ear. This could damage and tear the eardrum.

### **ACTIVITIES:**

- Encourage your child to play normally the day after surgery.
- Your child can go back to day care or school the day after surgery, if your child is feeling well.
- Airplane travel is also allowed.

### **RETURN VISIT TO THE DOCTOR:**

- A follow-up appointment may occur at 4-6 weeks after surgery or as directed by your physician.
- Usually, ear tubes will stay in place for 1 to 1 ½ years, and then naturally falls out on their own. The tubes are small and you may not notice when they come out. Therefore, it is important to return for a check-up every 6 months or as directed by your doctor.

**RECOGNIZING EAR INFECTIONS:**

- Remember, tubes DO NOT prevent all ear infections. The primary purpose of tubes is to provide additional ventilation to the ear and thereby decrease the frequency of ear infections. However, children with tubes can still develop middle ear infections. Drainage from the ear, which can vary in consistency and color from clear, yellow, green, brown, or blood-tinged, is the most common sign of ear infection. If there is no drainage, infection is very unlikely.
- Pulling at or scratching at the ears is not a reliable sign of an ear infection. Infections are usually not serious and can frequently be managed over the phone. These infections are best initially treated with antibiotic ear drops for 7-10 days.

**Reason to call the office:**

- Your child's ears leak fluid for more than 4 days after the operation.
- Your child has a fever over (101.5°F).
- Your child's ears start to leak fluid again after they have stopped leaking, or the color of the drainage changes to thick greenish pus with a strong smell.
- Your child's ears become sore.

If you have questions or concerns following your surgery please call our office at **907-671-6017** (after hours, ask for ENT doctor on call) or call **911** for emergency.