

Understanding Your Myringotomy With Tube Insertion

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What is a Myringotomy with Tubes insertion?

A myringotomy with tube insertion is a surgical procedure in which a 3mm incision is made in the eardrum, fluid is removed from the middle ear, and a tube is inserted in the eardrum for ventilation of the middle ear space.

What are the symptoms of fluid in the middle ear?

- Recurrent infections
- Hearing loss
- Fullness or pressure

What can surgery accomplish?

- Ventilate the middle ear to reduce the risk of infections and to equalize pressure
- Restore normal hearing
- Prevent hearing loss and impaired speech
- Alleviate other symptoms

Procedure

We will make a 3mm cut in the eardrum to insert the tubes. You can expect some bloody drainage from the ears for the next 3 days. Your child will be fussy and irritable for at least the next 2-4 hours. There is very minimal pain from the procedure. It is equivalent to a shot in the pediatrician's office. The tubes will last for approximately 6-12 months in the majority of children. Occasionally they will fall right out and we have to replace them. Occasionally they will not fall out and we will have to remove them after two years.

Post-operative medication

You will only need Tylenol at the very most for pain. I will give you antibiotic eardrops with or without an oral antibiotic depending on the severity of the infection when I place the tubes.

Recovery

I would expect a full recovery by the morning. Your child will also tug at their ears for several months. This doesn't mean that there is an ear infection; they just notice a difference in their ears because of the improved hearing. I would like you to make an appointment to follow up in about 4-6 weeks with a hearing test to make sure that the tubes stayed placed and to make sure the repeated ear infections did not damage the hearing.

Activity

I would recommend keeping water out of the ear canals for the first 30 days till they heal into place. Earplugs can be used and our office can make molded ones for you. After the first month only 10% of children will need plugs for the shower or bath to prevent water from rolling into the middle ear and causing an infection. However, children will need ear plugs when they swim in lake, river, or ocean water because this water is dirty. Ear plugs are not necessary for swimming pool water with chemicals.

Questions

Please feel free to contact the office at 9703)858-4439 or after hours call the answering service for emergencies only (703) 257-3911