

After Tympanostomy Tubes

Discharge instructions

ACTIVITY

Quiet activity for 24 hours. Please watch your child carefully as his/her coordination might be impaired. Please supervise stair climbing and rising from sitting to standing position for 24 hours after surgery.

DRESSINGS

Cotton might be in your child's ears. It can be removed if there is no active drainage. Clean cotton can be placed in several times a day if there is active drainage, which might occur for up to 7 days.

PRECAUTIONS

There may be a small amount of blood-stained or discolored fluid draining from the ears, which may occur for up to 7 days. Worsening or excessive blood or drainage should be reported to your surgeon.

Try to keep your child's ears dry. The tubes will allow any outside water into the middle ear, which can potentially cause an infection. Water exposure should be avoided, when at all possible.

Ear protection from the water is only necessary while your child is in water, such as bathing or swimming. For all age groups, soapy water carries the highest potential for entry into the middle ear through the tubes (i.e. washing hair), and ear protection is always necessary. During swimming, in younger children who are not submerging their head under water, ear protection is optional. Older children who are submerging their heads regularly and/or diving into the water while swimming must wear ear protection. One method of ear protection is to use cotton and petroleum jelly. Commercially sold plastic or putty ear plugs also work well. If your child will tolerate neither, talk to your surgeon about other options.

MEDICATION

You may be given a bottle of or prescription for ear drops to be used after surgery. The nurse will review the instructions with you. Please take them as directed. For help with using ear drops, please see the [tips for using ear drops](#) page of the Disease Info section.

PAIN

There may be some pain for the first several hours after surgery. This is usually controlled well with acetaminophen (Tylenol) as needed. Severe pain should be reported to your surgeon.