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## **TUBES POST-OPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS**

### ***Post Op Appointment Scheduled for:***

Your child has just had tubes placed in the eardrums. This instruction sheet is provided to help answer the most common questions about a child's care after tubes.

### ***What should I do if my child has bleeding from the ears?***

Occasionally children will have very minor bleeding from their ears after tubes. If more than a few drops come out, or if the bleeding persists for more than a day or so, give us a call.

### ***What if my child vomits after the surgery?***

While it is unusual for a child to vomit after tubes, it can occasionally occur, generally as a side effect of the anesthetics used. It is very unusual for the vomiting to continue. If it does, give us a call.

### ***Will my child's ears hurt after the surgery?***

Children generally feel much better with their ears after tubes, but some will complain of pain after the surgery. This can be treated with Tylenol and should stop after a day.

### ***What about other Medicines for pain?***

You should not give your child aspirin, or aspirin-containing products, or other products such as Motrin, Alleve, Ibuprofen or Naproxen. These products can interfere with your child's clotting system, which can lead to oozing. While this amount of bleeding is not dangerous to your child even a tiny drop of blood can clog the tube.

### ***Is it normal for my child to run a temperature?***

Most children do not run fevers after tubes. Occasionally, a child will have a low-grade fever for a day or so after the surgery. If the fever persists, give your doctor a call.

### ***Should my child be on antibiotics?***

If your child was on antibiotics before the tubes were placed, it is a good idea to finish the prescription. Occasionally, children with a great deal of fluid found at the time of surgery will need ear drops. If this is the case for your child, you will be provided with them.

### ***What about drainage from the ears?***

Children with long-standing ear infections before the surgery may well have drainage from the ears for several days after the surgery. This is infection and fluid from the middle ear that will stop as the infection resolves. Antibiotic drops may be prescribed to help treat the drainage. If drainage persists beyond five days, please give us a call.

### ***How long will it take my child to recover from the surgery and return to normal activities?***

A child will quickly recover from surgery for tubes. This is because the anesthetic exposure is so brief and the surgery is minimally invasive. Most children will be back to normal within an hour or so after the surgery. Occasionally, the afternoon nap will be a little longer than

normal for the first day. A child should be able to return to his or her normal activities the next day.

## **Metropolitan Ear, Nose and Throat Associates**

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### ***What should my child eat and drink after the surgery?***

The first sips after the surgery should be of clear liquids, such as water or juice. The child should rapidly progress to eating a regular diet.

### ***Why does my child tug at the ears after the surgery?***

It is not uncommon for a young child to tug or pull at the ears after surgery. We think that this is because they are so accustomed to feeling fullness in the ears from the fluid, that once the fluid is drained the ears feel odd. Young children in particular cannot express this verbally, so they pull or tug at the ears for several days until they get used to the feeling of having normal ears. Older children tell us that they cannot feel the tubes in their ears.

### ***Can my child hurt the tubes by sticking a finger in the ear canal?***

No, the tubes are further down in the ear canal than the child can reach.

### ***Will vigorous physical activity cause the tubes to come out?***

No your child can jump and run and bounce without fear that the tubes will come out.

### ***What about flying?***

Your child will do fine with flying as the tubes will allow the pressure in the ears to equalize easily.

### ***What about keeping water out of my child's ears?***

ENT doctors have different opinions as to whether you should keep water out of your child's ears after surgery. Some studies conclude that the risk of infection is reduced and other studies report no difference between children with or without water protection. We suggest that you keep water out of your child's ears after tubes have been placed. This can be accomplished with careful bathing techniques, but if your child loves to splash in the bath, you will need to use ear plugs. Cotton balls with Vaseline (dry cotton balls act as wicks and draw water into your child's ears), custom filled ear plugs (we supply these) or wax plugs available at your drugstore can all work. Swimming requires the use of ear plugs. Special bathing caps are also available to help hold the plugs in if needed.

Getting water in your child's ears once or twice is not a disaster. What you should try to avoid is chronic water exposure, as this can lead to infection and drainage from the tubes. Although this drainage can be treated with oral antibiotics or drops, we hope to avoid this, as one of the reasons your child had tubes placed in the first place was to try to reduce the amount of antibiotic administered.

Your child will need a checkup in one or two weeks to make sure everything is all right and to answer any of you questions. If things go as planned, your child will not need to be seen until a year after the surgery.

**Please call if you do not have a post-op appointment scheduled.**