

SAN FRANCISCO OTOLARYNGOLOGY

Providing ear, nose, and throat care since 1940

Post-Operative Instructions: Insertion of Ear tubes

Activity and Diet: Normal activity is permitted as soon as your child is able. Children usually return to normal activity within 6-24 hours after surgery. There are no dietary restrictions.

Pain: Children usually have little or no pain after surgery. If significant discomfort occurs, give Tylenol (acetaminophen) to relieve the pain. See the back of this sheet for dosing instructions.

Fever: A low grade fever (less than 101.5 degrees) may occur after surgery and should be treated with Tylenol (acetaminophen). If your child has a persistent fever higher than 101.5 °F, please call the office.

Ear drainage: There may be some blood-tinged discharge from the ears for 1-2 days after ear tube insertion. If bloody drainage persists for more than 5 days, please call the office.

Ear infections: If your child has an ear infection while ear tubes are in place, there may be drainage from the ears. The drainage may look like pus or blood, or have a bad smell. This usually means that an ear infection is present and that the ear tubes are functioning properly. Infections are generally treated with ear drops. If you have drops left over from the time of surgery that are not expired, you may start using them as soon as you see pus or blood draining from the ear. Please call the office or your pediatrician if this occurs.

Ear drops: We will send you home from surgery with ear drops for your child. Place 5 drops into each ear, in the morning and at night, for 3 days. If pus drains from the ear after 3 days, continue using for 4 more days (a total of one week). If the drainage does not stop after one week, please call the office.

Water precautions: Bathing, showers, or swimming in a pool with chlorine water does not usually require the use of ear protection or earplugs. If your child swims in a lake, ocean or pond, you may choose to use earplugs. A headband such as the Ear Band-it (www.earbandit.com) can help to keep earplugs secure. Your child should not participate in deep water diving when ear tubes are in place.

Follow up: Please schedule a visit 4-6 weeks after surgery with a hearing test. After this initial follow up visit, the ears should be checked every 6 months until the tubes fall out.

Please call if you have any questions!

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