

necessary.

Prevention

Routine immunization with the pneumococcal conjugate vaccine PCV7 (Prevnar 7) has reduced the incidence of AOM in some infants and children ([American Academy of Pediatrics Committee on Infectious Diseases and Pickering, 2012](#)). The vaccine is administered as a four-dose series beginning at 2 months old. In February 2010, a 13-valent pneumococcal conjugate vaccine (PCV13) was approved for use in children ages 6 weeks to 71 months old to protect against 13 pneumococcal serotypes. The Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices recommends routine vaccination with PCV13 of all children 2 to 59 months old, children 60 to 71 months old with underlying medical conditions that increase their risk for pneumococcal disease or complications, and children who previously received one or more doses of PCV7 ([Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2010](#)) (see [Immunizations, Chapter 6.](#))

Nursing Care Management

Nursing objectives for children with AOM include (1) relieving pain, (2) facilitating drainage when possible, (3) preventing complications or recurrence, (4) educating the family in care of the child, and (5) providing emotional support to the child and family.

Analgesic drugs such as acetaminophen (all ages) and ibuprofen (6 months of age and older) are used to treat mild pain.

If the ear is draining, the external canal may be cleaned with sterile cotton swabs or pledgets coupled with topical antibiotic treatment. If ear wicks or lightly rolled sterile gauze packs are placed in the ear after surgical treatment, they should be loose enough to allow accumulated drainage to flow out of the ear; otherwise, infection may be transferred to the mastoid process. The wicks need to stay dry during shampoos or baths. Occasionally, drainage is so profuse that the auricle and the skin surrounding the ear become excoriated from the exudate. This is prevented by frequent cleansing and application of various moisture barriers (e.g., Proshield Plus), zinc oxide–based products, or petrolatum jelly (e.g., Vaseline).

Tympanostomy tubes may allow water to enter the middle ear,