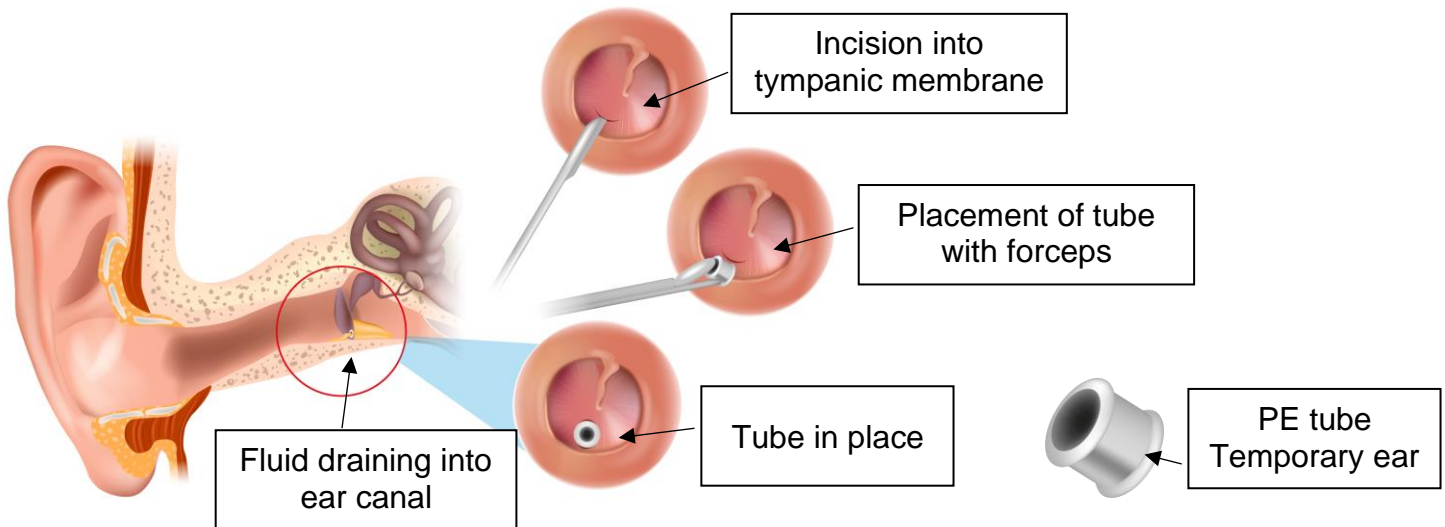


# Instructions After Ear Tube Surgery

Ear tubes, also known as tympanostomy or pressure equalizing tubes, are inserted through the ear drum to drain fluid behind the ear drum. It will allow air to enter and maintain a healthier ear. Ear tubes cannot be felt or seen by your child. The tubes will remain in place for 6 to 24 months, but that length of time may vary. The tubes usually fall out naturally on their own.



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| Ear Drops           | <p>You may be given a medication or a prescription for antibiotic ear drops if your doctor did not insert a gel medication into your child's ear during surgery. Starting the evening after surgery:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Place ear drops into the ear twice a day, as instructed. This will help treat any possible infection inside the ear.</li> <li>2. Warm the ear drop bottle inside the palm of your hand for 5 minutes before giving the ear drops. This will help prevent ear discomfort.</li> <li>3. Your child's surgeon will give the first dose of ear drops during surgery, if needed.</li> </ol> |
| Eating and Drinking | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Your child can return to their regular diet immediately after leaving the hospital.</li> </ul>  |
| Activity            | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If ear tube insertion is the only procedure your child had on the day of surgery, then your child can return to school and all regular activity the next day.</li> <li>• The recovery room nurse will give you a school excuse before leaving the hospital.</li> </ul>  |
| Water Restriction   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Your child may bathe, shower, or swim in the pool without ear plugs.</li> </ul>   |

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|                     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b><u>Surface swimming is okay (keeping their head out of the water).</u></b></li> <li>• Use ear plugs if your child puts their head under water during swimming.</li> <li>• Do not allow your child to swim if their ear is actively draining fluid.</li> </ul>  |
| Ear Drainage        | <p>Your child may have fluid coming out of their ear (drainage) for several days after surgery.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It can be clear, yellow, or red/bloody.</li> <li>• The drainage may have a foul odor.</li> <li>• Using antibiotic ear drops (as you were instructed) will help stop any drainage.</li> <li>• Place a cotton ball on the outside of the ear to absorb any drainage. Change it as often you need to.</li> <li>• Oral antibiotics are usually not needed.</li> </ul> |
| Nausea and vomiting | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Your child may have these symptoms within the first 24 hours after surgery because of the anesthesia. Keep your child hydrated by drinking fluids but smaller amounts more often.</li> </ul>  |
| Fever               | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An elevated body temperature after surgery can be a normal response after surgery. Use over the counter (OTC) pain medication (Ex: Children's acetaminophen or ibuprofen) and increase the amount of fluid they drink.</li> </ul>   |
| Pain/Discomfort     | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Ear discomfort, usually very mild, may last for 1 to 2 days after surgery even if the ear is draining. Your child may experience no discomfort at all.</li> <li>2. Children's Liquid acetaminophen (Tylenol) or Children's Liquid ibuprofen (Motrin or Advil) can be given for pain as needed.</li> </ol>  |
| Hearing Tests       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A hearing test or audiogram may be recommended in some children after surgery.</li> <li>• It is preferred that a child's ears not be actively draining at the time of a hearing test.</li> <li>• Your medical provider will let you know when to repeat their next hearing test, if needed.</li> </ul>  |

### Who do I call for a follow-up appointment?

- Call the Otolaryngology (ENT) clinic if you have questions or concerns.
- Call our office to make a follow-up appointment with the Otolaryngology (ENT) service 4 - 6 weeks after surgery.
- **Otolaryngology Clinic phone number: (323)-361-2145**

### Otolaryngology

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Approved by PFE 06/23/22