

Discharge Instructions for Mastoidectomy (Child)



Your child had a procedure called mastoidectomy. This is the surgical removal of the mastoid bone, which is located behind the ear. A mastoidectomy is most often done to treat infection in the mastoid bone or surrounding tissue. Here's what you need to know about home care.

What to expect

- Dizziness
- Hearing problems
- Bloody or watery drainage
- Pain
- Loss of taste

Ear and incision care

- Give your child medicine exactly as directed.
- Keep your child's head elevated as instructed by the surgeon.
- Discourage your child from blowing their nose. Don't allow your child to hold the nose closed.
- Show your child how to sneeze with the mouth open.
- Follow the surgeon's instructions for baths and showers.

Activity

- Make sure your child avoids activities that involve heavy lifting and straining.
- Get your healthcare provider's permission before allowing your child to fly in a plane or swim.
- Ask your healthcare provider when your child may return to school.

Follow-up care

Make a follow-up appointment as advised. It's important to go to all follow-up appointments so the surgeon can make sure your child is healing well and has no complications.

When to call your healthcare provider

Unless advised otherwise by your child's healthcare provider, call the provider right away if your child has:

- Fever of 100.4°F (38°C) or higher, or as directed by your provider (see Fever and children, below)
- Continued or increased ear drainage
- Drainage that has an odor or is green or yellow

- Continued ear pain
- Pain, redness, or swelling behind the ear
- Hearing problems
- Weakness or numbness on the side of the face
- Continued dizziness
- Facial droop

Fever and children

Use a digital thermometer to check your child's temperature. Don't use a mercury thermometer. There are different kinds and uses of digital thermometers. They include:

- **Rectal.** For children younger than 3 years, a rectal temperature is the most accurate.
- **Forehead (temporal).** This works for children age 3 months and older. If a child under 3 months old has signs of illness, this can be used for a first pass. The provider may want to confirm with a rectal temperature.
- **Ear (tympanic).** Ear temperatures are accurate after 6 months of age, but not before.
- **Armpit (axillary).** This is the least reliable but may be used for a first pass to check a child of any age with signs of illness. The provider may want to confirm with a rectal temperature.
- **Mouth (oral).** Don't use a thermometer in your child's mouth until they are at least 4 years old.

Use a rectal thermometer with care. Follow the product maker's directions for correct use. Insert it gently. Label it and make sure it's not used in the mouth. It may pass on germs from the stool. If you don't feel OK using a rectal thermometer, ask the healthcare provider what type to use instead. When you talk with any healthcare provider about your child's fever, tell them which type you used.

Below is when to call the healthcare provider if your child has a fever. Your child's healthcare provider may give you different numbers. Follow their instructions.

When to call a healthcare provider about your child's fever

For a baby under 3 months old:

- First, ask your child's healthcare provider how you should take the temperature.
- Rectal or forehead: 100.4°F (38°C) or higher
- Armpit: 99°F (37.2°C) or higher
- A fever of _____ as advised by the provider

For a child age 3 months to 36 months (3 years):

- Rectal or forehead: 102°F (38.9°C) or higher
- Ear (only for use over age 6 months): 102°F (38.9°C) or higher
- A fever of _____ as advised by the provider

In these cases:

- Armpit temperature of 103°F (39.4°C) or higher in a child of any age
- Temperature of 104°F (40°C) or higher in a child of any age

- A fever of _____ as advised by the provider

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