

TYMPANOSTOMY TUBES

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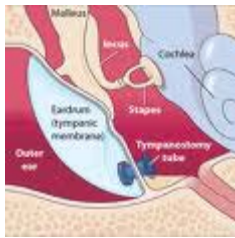
INDICATIONS FOR TUBES

There are two main reasons for a child to have tympanostomy tubes placed.

- Some children require tubes because they have frequent ear infections. Repeated ear infections can be very painful and disruptive to daily life and development. Placement of tubes for this child will increase the quality of life of the child and family as it reduces the number of ear infections and their associated symptoms.
- Another indication for tubes is for a child who has persistent fluid in the middle ear spaces (behind the eardrum) for 3 months or more. The fluid can cause a temporary hearing loss as a result of the fluid buildup in the middle ear. This may also impact on speech and language development.

WHAT ARE TYMPANOSTOMY TUBES

A tympanostomy tube is a tiny tube that is placed through a small opening in the ear drum (tympanic membrane). This tube will allow air to enter the middle ear space, and also allows any fluid in the middle ear space to drain out.



HOW LONG DO THEY LAST

Tympanostomy tubes generally remain in place for 6 months to a year. However there is no way of knowing how long the tubes will last. They will usually fall out on their own. You may or may not see the tube when it comes out. About 20% of children will require another set of tubes when their initial tubes fall out.

RISKS

As with any surgery, there are some risks associated with the placement of tympanostomy tubes.

- Your child will receive general anesthesia for the procedure. There is a very small chance that there will be a complication from the anesthesia.
- There is a 1/100 chance of a small hole being left in the ear drum when the tube does fall out. If this were to occur, the hole can be patched in the operating room at a later date.

THE DAY OF SURGERY....

- The surgery is performed in the Pediatric Operating Room. The procedure will take approximately 10 minutes. Your child will receive anesthesia via a mask and will probably not require any IVs or needles. Once the tubes are placed, your child will go to the recovery room (PACU or Post-Anesthesia Care Unit). You can be with your child at this time. Often children are very disoriented and upset as they come out of the anesthesia. This is normal. Within an hour or so, your child will be back to themselves and you will be ready to go home.
- You will be given some ear drops to place into your child's ears each day. We would like you to put 4 drops in each ear, twice a day for three days.

FOLLOW-UP

- We would like to see your child three weeks following the surgery to check the tubes. Then we would like to see your child every four to six months to continue to monitor your child's ears.
- Some children will continue to get ear infections after the tubes have been placed. However, they are less common and not associated with the pain and discomfort or fever that children experience before tube placement. When an ear infection does occur, the fluid will drain out through the tube. Your child should be seen by your primary care provider or we would be happy to see them in our office. Most ear infections will be treated with ear drops instead of oral antibiotics when the tubes are in place and functioning.
- There is no special care required once the tympanostomy tubes are in place. Normal bathing, swimming and water play is permitted in most cases without any restrictions (i.e. Plugs).

If you ever have questions or concerns, we would be happy to talk to you or see your child at any time.