

Caring for Your Child After an Adenoidectomy, Myringotomy and Tube Placement

Your child had surgery to help improve chronic ear problems. The adenoid is in the back of the nose. It can cause problems with eustachian tube function. The eustachian tube drains fluid from the middle ear space, which is behind the eardrum, to the back of the nose. This helps balance the pressure in the ears. It is what allows you to “pop” your ears when you yawn or swallow in an elevator or an airplane. Removing the adenoid helps this tube function more normally.

Myringotomy and tube placement create a temporary opening in the eardrum with the tube. This allows for instant balance of pressure and helps any fluid in the ear to dry up.

What to Expect

- A sore throat for up to a week.
- A small amount of bloody drainage from the nose is common.
- A low-grade fever up to 102° F that can last up to 7 days.
- Neck pain for up to 10 days. A warm heating pad (**not hot**), soaking in a warm bath, or massaging the neck may help.
- Foul smelling breath for 2 to 3 weeks.
- Nasal-sounding voice and/or snoring. This will go away in time. If it lasts longer than 3 months, tell your doctor.
- Restless sleep or nightmares for a couple of weeks.
- Slight drainage from the ear for 1 to 3 days. The drainage may be bloody, clear, or pus-like.

Ear Drops

You will need to give your child ear drops 3 times a day for 3 days. Hold the bottle in your hand or pocket for a few minutes before giving ear drops. This may make the drops more comfortable for your child.

Diet

Your child may feel sick to their stomach from the anesthesia. Start with clear liquids. Add solid food as your child can handle it. If they vomit, start over with clear liquids. Have your child drink plenty of fluids. Give liquids often, even if they are just sips.

Pain

Your doctor may suggest giving acetaminophen (Tylenol®), along with ibuprofen. You will be told the proper dose for both of these the day of surgery.

Activity

Your child may go back to school or daycare in 2 to 5 days, if well enough. Normal routines may resume when feeling better.

Most children with tubes do not need ear plugs. There are some cases, like if your child has ear pain or drainage after swimming, the doctor may suggest ear plugs.

Follow-up

Your child will have a follow-up visit at the Pediatric ENT clinic in 1-3 months.

Tube Care

It is normal for ears to drain from time to time while tubes are in place. This drainage tells us there is fluid in the middle ear space. This could cause infection if not treated. The drainage may be clear, yellow, white, green

or bloody. Sometimes both ears may drain and sometimes it may be one or the other.

Call the clinic if your child's ear(s) have drainage. Nursing staff will have your child start using ear drops. They will tell you how to give the ear drops.

Once you have the ear drop medicine, you may treat your child's ear drainage if it starts after hours or on the weekend. Call the clinic to report the drainage once clinic opens again.

When to Call

- Nausea and vomiting that doesn't go away
- Fever over 102° F
- Bleeding from the nose or mouth that doesn't stop
- Pain that doesn't go away after taking Tylenol® and ibuprofen
- Ear pain that lasts more than 3 days
- Ear drainage doesn't go away after stopping the ear drops
- If you have any questions or concerns

Who to Call

Pediatric Otolaryngology (ENT) Clinic
Monday-Friday, 8:00 am to 4:30 pm
(608) 263-6420, option 3

After hours, weekends and holidays, this number will give you the paging operator. Ask for the Otolaryngology (ENT) doctor on call. Give your name and phone number with the area code. The doctor will call you back.

The toll-free number is **1-800-323-8942**.

If you are a patient receiving care at UnityPoint – Meriter, Swedish American or a health system outside of UW Health, please use the phone numbers provided in your discharge instructions for any questions or concerns.

Your health care team may have given you this information as part of your care. If so, please use it and call if you have any questions. If this information was not given to you as part of your care, please check with your doctor. This is not medical advice. This is not to be used for diagnosis or treatment of any medical condition. Because each person's health needs are different, you should talk with your doctor or others on your health care team when using this information. If you have an emergency, please call 911. Copyright © 11/2020 University of Wisconsin Hospitals and Clinics Authority. All rights reserved. Produced by the Department of Nursing. HF#5849