

Myringotomy/Tubes Surgery

Pre-Procedure Care Instructions

Understanding your procedure.

You or your child has been scheduled for a myringotomy and tubes surgery with ENT Specialty Care. We have gathered some helpful patient information for you to review both before and after your procedure. If for any reason you need to reschedule your surgery, please call our office right away.

What is a Myringotomy /Tube Surgery?

Commonly known as getting ear tubes, this is a minor surgery in which a miniscule incision is made into the ear drum before placing a temporary plastic tube within the opening. This tiny tube allows continual ventilation of the ear drum. The procedure itself only takes minutes to complete.

How is the procedure performed?

For children, ear tubes are usually placed under general anesthesia. In adults, these procedures can be done using local anesthesia. Your doctor will discuss which method is recommended for you or your child.

Why are they done?

Ear tubes allow built-up ear fluids to drain out freely. They also prevent future fluid build-up, reduce infections, improve hearing, and allow direct placement of medication into the middle ear.

How to Prepare for Your Procedure

If your procedure will require anesthesia, it is very important to follow these instructions to prepare for your surgery in the method that fits your age category. Coming into your surgical appointment with an empty stomach is required for a safe and successful procedure. Discuss your current prescriptions with your doctor at least 2 weeks prior to surgery.



***For Infants and Babies up to Age 1:***

- Starting 2 hours before scheduled surgery time, absolutely nothing by mouth
- Up to 2 hours before surgery, may have glucose water
- Up to 4 hours before surgery, may have breastmilk or formula
- Up to 6 hours before surgery, may have solid foods
- No pain medication other than Tylenol

For Children Ages 1-5:

- Starting 4 hours before scheduled surgery time, absolutely nothing by mouth
- Up to 4 hours before surgery, may have clear liquids (water, apple juice, etc.)
- Up to 6 hours before surgery, may have solid foods
- No pain medication other than Tylenol or Advil

For Adults and Children Ages 6+:

- Starting 6 hours before scheduled surgery time, absolutely nothing by mouth
- Up to 6 hours before surgery, may have clear liquids (water, tea, apple juice, black coffee with no cream, etc.)
- Up to 8 hours before surgery, may have solid foods
- No aspirin or pain medication other than Tylenol or Advil

If for any reason you need to reschedule your surgery, please call us right away.

Day of Surgery

Your procedure time may include the use of anesthetics to keep you or your child comfortable during surgery. Adult patients requiring anesthesia should arrange to have someone else with to drive them to and from their surgery.

Myringotomy/Tubes Surgery

Post-Procedure Care Instructions

Following Your Procedure

Today's procedure time may have included the use of anesthetics to ensure a comfortable surgery. Once those effects wear off, you'll be able to go home and follow these guidelines for enhanced recovery. Adult patients who required anesthesia should arrange to have someone else with to drive them to and from their surgery.

When to Call

Call right away if you have any questions or concerns—we want you to feel comfortable contacting us anytime throughout your recovery period, especially if you experience the following:

- Uncontrolled pain, even with the use of over-the-counter medications
- Continued drainage for over 7 days
- Extreme pain caused by the drops themselves
- Redness, swelling, or scaling of the ear
- Nausea or vomiting for more than 6-8 hours after surgery
- A fever greater than 101 degrees for more than 24 hours after surgery

Call **612.871.1144** Monday through Friday

from 9:00 a.m. until 5:00 p.m. with any concerns. Our answering service will contact the on-call provider for urgent after-hours needs. Remember, you can also seek care at urgent care or an emergency room. Call 911 in case of an emergency.

Follow-up Care

If you've been instructed to schedule a follow-up visit, please call today to make that first appointment. Your surgeon may choose to modify these post-operative instructions, including your follow-up care plan.





8 Tips for Enhanced Recovery

- 1.** Your doctor may have prescribed ear drops. The bottle or prescription will tell you when and how long to use this medication. In general, the drops will be more comfortable if they're warmed to body temperature. Have the patient lie down or tilt the head so the ear opening is facing up. Place the drops directly into the ear canal, press on the flap of skin and cartilage in front of the ear canal (called the tragus) several times to plunge the drops down through the tube. It is common and okay to taste these drops in the back of the throat. It is also normal to experience a minor burning sensation in the ear when they're given. Save the bottle for reference at follow-up visits.
- 2.** Some drainage, which may appear bloody, is normal for a few days and while using ear drops.
- 3.** Pain is usually minimal to none, and should be easily controlled with over-the-counter pain medication. Pain can be controlled, but not completely alleviated.
- 4.** Patients may notice a dramatic increase in their hearing, which can be especially alarming for children. Be sensitive to volume levels until hearing is comfortable and undistorted.
- 5.** Unless your doctor recommends otherwise, there is no need to protect your ears from everyday water exposure, like showering, swimming above water, and even splashing around. However, ear plugs should be used for diving underwater and for bathing in soapy water where ears are submerged.
- 6.** The tubes are designed to stay in the ears for anywhere from six months to two years, and then they fall out on their own. Most of the time you won't notice when this happens, which is okay. Contact sports or typical physical activity won't cause the tubes to fall out prematurely.
- 7.** You should have regularly scheduled ear exams until the tubes fall out. Your doctor will determine the schedule that's best for you.
- 8.** Be aware that it is still possible to get ear infections after tube surgery. While typically painless after tubes are in, they usually cause drainage. These infections are best treated with ear drops rather than oral antibiotics. Call your doctor if you notice significant ear drainage after your initial post-surgery ear drop regimen.