

Ear Tubes (BMT) Instructions

Instructions Regarding Ear Tubes

- Drainage from the ear for a day or two is not uncommon. Should the ear drain thick pus for more than a few days, phone the office, or if eardrops have already been prescribed, fill the prescription and use as directed. Leave the ear exposed to the air without cotton or gauze plug unless drainage is so profuse it drips from the ear or gets in the hair.
- For information regarding keeping the ears dry, please consult your physician. In general, avoid getting water in the ears at least until the drainage has stopped, indicating resolution of the pre-existing infection. This can be accomplished by placing a piece of cotton with Vaseline on the outside in the outer bowl of the ear.
- Patients occasionally experience dizziness after placement of the tubes. This will subside generally within a few hours and need not be of concern other than to avoid activities, which might be dangerous during this period of time.
- There are no restrictions in relation to air or mountain travel as the result of placement of ear tubes.
- The tube is often left to spontaneously extrude and in such event it will be found lying loose in the ear canal on return visit to the office and will be removed at that time. The patient will probably not know when it comes out and it will do no harm lying in the canal until it is removed.
- It is normal to run a low-grade temperature the day of surgery (100-101). You may give Tylenol (non aspirin pain reliever) and encourage fluids. Call your physician or Surgery Center if this action doesn't reduce temperature.
- Hearing is generally improved after tubes are inserted. Because sounds may be amplified, the patient may require some reassurance that what they are experiencing is normal. In addition, it is not unusual to experience temporary referred throat pain from the placement of ear tubes.

Ear Tubes (PE)

PROS

- Restores optimal hearing from a mild hearing loss
- Reduces ear infections and the need for repeated antibiotics
- Easy to insert—10 minute operation
- Very safe—Complications are rare and correctable if occur
- Temporary—the tubes either come out on their own(90% of the time) or can be removed when no longer needed, usually after one or two years.
- Painless—they cannot be felt.

CONS

- Requires a short general anesthetic.
- Small chance(5%) of a persistent small hole in the eardrum that requires patching.
- Cost—varies with insurance coverage although all of them pay for the procedure as it is the most common surgical procedure done in the United States.
- Water precaution—children should wear a swimming cap or use earplugs if their ears become submerged while swimming. It is usually not necessary to take these precautions while showering, or bathing in a tub.