
Ear, Nose & Throat Center of Austin

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Myringotomy Tubes (BMT) Post-op Instructions

The days following surgery:

- Activity is only self-limiting. After several hours, most patients return to their usual activities.
- You may shower or bathe with a piece of cotton in the affected ear(s) to prevent infection from dirty water. **DO NOT** get any water into the ear.
- After 3 to 4 days, you may swim only if you wear protective ear molds. **DO NOT** dive or swim at deep levels of water or do somersaults under the water.
- Foods: Normal diet may be resumed if no nausea and/or vomiting has occurred. Gradually work up from clear liquids to crackers to foods that are tolerated. Infants may resume normal diet immediately. Remember to drink plenty of fluids if you have no restrictions to do so. Water is best!
- Call your doctor's office for a follow-up appointment. You should be seen 7 to 10 days after your surgery.

Answers to FAQ's on post-op issues:

- With the tubes in, the ears may occasionally drain mucus or purulent secretions with upper respiratory illnesses. Call your doctor promptly so that medication, if needed, may be prescribed. You may begin antibiotic eardrops as prescribed by your doctor.
- The middle ear ventilation tubes gradually migrate out toward the opening of the ear canal and then will fall out like a piece of wax. This takes approximately six months following surgery. It is important to be seen by your doctor every three to four months for an ear examination after the tubes are inserted.
- Notify your doctor if ear pain and a fever of greater than 101 as an infection may be developing. An infection 'may be accompanied by ear drainage or the tube may be blocked. (Fever with no ear pain or drainage is probably not an ear infection.)
- Breathing complications with children after general anesthesia occur rarely. The symptoms are croupy sounds when breathing in, noisy gasping sounds or abdominal tension with breathing.
- If you were given narcotics/pain medication during surgery or prescribed narcotics after surgery, watch for urinary retention. This is especially common in males over 50 or males with a history of prostate problems. Contact your physician if you are unable to urinate within hours of your surgery.
- With all patients, common symptoms with narcotics/pain medications are itching without rash and nausea. If rash or vomiting develop after taking a medication please contact your physician

Medications:

- If your doctor ordered medication, take as he or she directed. If you have questions regarding your medication, please check with your pharmacist or doctor.
- **DO NOT** use any medication within the ear without your doctor's approval. If eardrops have been prescribed, warm the bottle in your hand until the medication reaches body temperature before instilling into the ear.
- Tylenol is usually adequate for discomfort.
- Do not take Aspirin products.
- Motrin may be taken for breakthrough pain if absolutely necessary, but can tend to thin the blood so do not use in cases of excessive bleeding.
- Do not drive or operate any machinery or drink alcoholic beverages for 24 hours or while taking narcotics.

It has been a pleasure to serve you.