



Ventilation Tubes/ "Grommets"

Recommended sick leave

Generally only one or two days is all that is needed following grommet insertion

Medications

If you are required to use ear drops place 3 drops into each operated ear, 3 times a day for 3 days, unless otherwise directed.

Ear Protection

Ears are best kept dry but occasional "accidents" occur which rarely lead to infection.

In the shower, usually no protection is required but ear plugs or cotton wool balls with Vaseline on the outside can be used. A waterproof ear plug may also be fashioned out of "Blue-Tack" (available from newsagents). Children whilst bathing should be supervised to ensure their ears remain dry and that their ear plugs stay in place. Alternatively special ear plugs may be custom made for your child.

Pain

Pain is unusual and if it occurs is generally short lasting. Panadol, Painstop or panadeine or similar should suffice.

Increasing or persistent pain, especially with ear discharge is a sign of infection and should be reported to Mr Leung's office or your GP.

Ear discharge

A small amount of discharge is usual in the first few days after surgery, especially if the middle ears were infected at the time or contained a significant amount of fluid/ "glue" in them. This may even be blood stained which is no cause for concern in the first few days.

If discharge persists or recurs, this may indicate infection and require treatment with either oral or topical antibiotics. This can occur with a cold for example. About 15% of patients with grommets will experience an episode of discharge whilst they have them in their ears.

For recurrent discharge, Ciprofloxacin HC ear drops, 3 drops, 3 times a day into the affected ear for one week only usually suffices and should be prescribed by your GP if Mr Leung is not available. If unwell with an acute infection, oral antibiotics may be required.

Swimming

Is permitted only if the child is wearing earplugs and a tight fitting swim cap or head band.

Flying

Most patients are able to fly within a few days after surgery. Ask Mr Leung for specific advice if you are planning on flying around the time of surgery.

Follow up appointments

Ventilation tubes typically fall out by themselves between 6-12 months. Occasionally they may fall out sooner or fail to extrude, both of which may require re-operation depending on individual circumstances. Patients are usually reviewed at 2 weeks after their operation and then have a postoperative audiogram/ hearing check scheduled. Follow up reviews are then every 6 months until the tubes have extruded and ears returned to normal function.

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