



Vent Tubes and Myringotomy

The Operation

This procedure places a tiny slit in the eardrum to drain any fluid. A tiny tube is then inserted to prevent further fluid accumulation.

This tube will stay in approximately 8-12 months. The slit that was made will usually heal without any intervention. If the slit remains after the tube falls out, the opening can be closed surgically. Also, the tube may stay in longer than needed and have to be removed surgically.

What to Expect After the Tube is Placed

Start with a clear liquid diet the first few hours after surgery, due to possible nausea/ vomiting from anesthesia. A regular diet may be started as soon as tolerated.

Dry ear precautions may be recommended after the tubes are in place, but in most cases you can get the ears wet while bathing or shallow swimming. Earplugs are required with deep swimming or exposure to untreated water (example: Lake water). **Do not place any drops or solution in the ear with a vent tube, unless prescribed by a Dr. Fletcher.** Many over the counter drops can be very painful on the middle ear.

While the tubes are in place, you may see clear to yellowish drainage with a head cold. Call Dr. Fletcher, if the drainage persists past the cold or is discolored with a foul odor. Eardrops may be needed, in this case, to treat a mild ear infection.

Office Visit After the Surgery

We like to examine the ear approximately 10-14 days after the tube placement. This visit may include a hearing test. Regular rechecks are recommended every 4-6 months until the tubes fall out. This will help ensure the proper placement and function of the tubes.