

DISCHARGE INSTRUCTIONS FOR VENTILATION TUBE INSERTION

1. Following ventilation tube insertion little to no pain should be experienced. In some exceptional cases, the patient may complain of some mild discomfort and younger children may be noted to be pulling at their ears. Often this is more a sensation of fullness in the ears, much as one experiences when coming down out of the mountains. Sharp or severe pain, if and when it occurs, will usually respond to mild pain relievers such as Tylenol or Ibuprofen.
2. Drainage from the ears following ventilation tube insertion is not uncommon. For the first day or two, some blood-tinged drainage may be seen and should not be considered alarming. Drainage can be mucopurulent. However, drainage for more than a few days or any drainage that becomes yellow or green discolored, or has a foul odor to it should be reported to our office immediately. Even after the tubes have been in for some time, drainage may occur through the tubes to the outside of the ear. This usually is due to a head cold or allergy, or can be as a result of contamination of the ear, usually as a result of water entering the ear through bathing or swimming. Again, such drainage should be reported to our office.
3. As has been previously explained, water should be kept out of the ears while the tubes are in place. While bathing and shampooing the hair, cotton covered with a coating of Bacitracin or Neosporin should be used. *Swimming is permitted while the tubes are in place, but only with the consistent use of ear plugs.* Cotton ball and Ointment are *ineffective protection* for the ears while swimming.
4. Upon arriving home after the ventilation tube insertion, a liquid diet should be instituted as soon as the patient is reasonably awake. A regular diet may be resumed as soon as the liquid diet has been properly tolerated.
5. The patient should be kept at relative rest for the first day, but regular activities can resume the day following the ventilation tube insertion.
6. The first postoperative visit is scheduled for one to two weeks after surgery. Follow-up visits will probably be every four to six months until the tubes are out.