



The Colorado Ear, Nose & Throat Group

Myringotomy (Ear Tube) Instructions

About Myringotomy with Tubes:

Myringotomy with tubes refers to a procedure in which a small, millimeters wide incision is made in the ear drum and a tube is placed to relieve pressure, fluid or help with recurrent infections. In children this is performed under general anesthesia, while in adults this can easily be performed in the office

Before your surgery:

- **You may not eat or drink anything, including water after midnight on the day of surgery. However, you may take medications with a sip of water the day of surgery.**

After your surgery:

- **Mild pain and discomfort is to be expected.**
Alternating Tylenol and Motrin is recommended for pain relief after placement of tubes. This is often only needed for the first day or two.
- **Expect some drainage after having tubes placed.**
This drainage can either be bloody or clear and resolves on its own within a week. You can place a cotton ball at the opening of the ear canal to catch any drainage.
- **You will be prescribed an ear drop.**
Apply four drops to the affected ear(s) twice daily for the first three days after surgery, this helps to ensure the tubes stay open and treat any underlying infection if present.
- **Use earplugs if submerged greater than six-feet underwater.**
No ear protection is needed for shallow swimming or routine bathing. Use ear plugs if submerging six-feet or deeper.
- **Ear tubes will fall out on their own in most cases**
Depending on the type of ear tube placed, tubes will fall out in anywhere from six months to a year. Some longer lasting tubes for chronic ear issues will stay in place for years.