



Joseph M. Scianna, M.D.  
Northern Illinois ENT Specialists, LTD  
2535 Bethany Rd.  
(815) 758- 8106

## EAR TUBES

### General information:

- ◆ Normally ear fluid drains into the back of the nose through a passage known as the Eustachian tube.
- ◆ In children (and sometimes adults) this tube does not function properly.
- ◆ Fluid build up in the middle ear can lead to multiple or prolonged ear infections.
- ◆ Fluid in the middle ear can seriously affect hearing which can have devastating effects on the learning and development of speech in a child.
- ◆ Indications for ear tube surgery include:
  - Chronic ear infections
  - Prolonged fluid in the middle ear
  - Ear infections resulting in speech development delay

### Procedure considerations:

- ◆ Ear tube surgery is generally a less than ½ hour surgery.
- ◆ This type of surgery is always performed under general anesthesia.
- ◆ Generally this surgery is painless.
- ◆ Follow-up is generally two weeks post surgery.

### Risks of surgery:

- ◆ All surgeries have risks and only the most important are listed here.
- ◆ There is a risk of bleeding with any surgery. This is generally a very limited amount of bleeding in the ear canal.
- ◆ There is a risk of infection anytime any surgery is done. Signs of infection include fever, night sweats, unusual pain, or discharge of thick pus from the ear. Please report concerns of infection to the office.
- ◆ Rarely placement of an ear tube can result in a permanent hole in the ear drum called a tympanic membrane perforation. A second surgery may be required to repair such a hole.
- ◆ Ear tubes generally last 6 months to 2 years. Tubes can come out early, or not come out. At times a second surgery is required to replace a tube or remove a retained tube.

### Post surgery instructions:

- ◆ Take pain medication as directed/needed.
- ◆ Avoid aspirin containing products or blood thinners for two weeks post surgery.
- ◆ Take any antibiotic or other medication if provided, this may be an ear drop.
- ◆ KEEP WATER OUT OF THE EAR. Place a cotton ball in the ear prior to baths or showers. If swimming, ear plugs MUST be obtained. The ear tube allows for water to get into the middle ear and can cause an infection and pain.