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EAR, NOSE & THROAT SURGEON

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Grommets

Most often ear infections or mucus trapped behind the ear drum (glue ear) is due to Eustachian tube dysfunction. The Eustachian tube runs between the back of the nose and the middle ear. Its job is to bring air from the nose to the middle ear, but also to drain mucus produced in the middle ear to the back of the nose, after which it is swallowed. If the Eustachian tube is not functioning the above ear problems occur. A grommet is inserted as a temporary measure until the Eustachian tube resumes normal functioning. Glue ear may lead to hearing impairment and possible speech delay in toddlers. A grommet will improve the hearing and alleviate discomfort almost immediately.

A grommet is a ventilation tube inserted into the ear drum to facilitate ventilation of the middle ear. Under anaesthetic a small cut is made into the ear drum, the fluid in the middle ear is suctioned out and the grommet is placed. The grommet usually falls out by itself between 6 and 9 months after the surgery.

Your child may experience discomfort or pain in the first 24 hours after surgery. You can use any analgesic to make him/her more comfortable. They should be fit to return to school the 2nd day after the surgery.

Because of the surgery, occasionally an ear discharge develops post-operatively, which may be blood stained. Please do not be alarmed by it. You will receive ear drops to take home upon discharge. Please complete the treatment course.

Swimming after grommets is allowed, but be careful to prevent water getting into the ears. Surface splashing is fine, but if the head is going to be submerged, please use ear plugs. I prefer it if my patients use cotton wool covered with petroleum jelly, but many parents prefer to use prestik.

You may find that when your child develops an upper respiratory tract infection and the nose is very runny, an ear discharge develops as well. Please call the rooms or bring your child in for treatment.

A free follow up visit should be scheduled about a month after the surgery.

We wish you a speedy recovery