

Patient Information Leaflet

Grommet Insertion

**THE
MEDICAL
SPECIALIST
GROUP
LLP**

Mr David Beaumont

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Discharge Advice following Grommet Insertion

Grommet insertion is an extremely safe and straightforward procedure and problems following it are rare. The most common problem is discharge from the ear (early or late) and the following advice is given to minimise this risk and help manage it if it occurs.

1. Return to School/Work

If Grommet insertion has been performed alone, then you can return to school/work after 24 hours.

2. Exercise and Swimming

There are no restrictions on general activities and you **are** allowed to swim and shower etc with Grommets in nearly all cases. Standard Grommets are so small that they do not normally allow significant amounts of water into the middle ear and even if this does occur it rarely causes anything other than minor irritation, not unlike getting water in our eyes.

You should however not swim in dirty water eg. a river, dive head first into water or 'duck dive' too deep under the water as these activities can theoretically lead to infection and discharge. Similarly you should not submerge your ears under dirty, soapy bath water as this contains bacteria from your body and not only is soap irritant but it also allows water to pass through the Grommets more easily.

Showering and hair washing without protection are fine but if you find this irritating a simple disposable plug of cotton wool smeared with Vaseline acts as an excellent water tight seal.

Overall, the chance of infection following water contamination is so small that it is much more important that your child learns to swim and enjoys normal activities rather than be restricted in any way.

3. Socialising

After the first 24 hours, there are no restrictions on socialising or contacting other children/people.

4. Pain Relief

The procedure is usually painless but if there is any discomfort it should be covered well by Paracetamol (Calpol).

5. Bleeding from the Ear

Sometimes there will be some bloodstained fluid drain from the ear in the first few hours after the operation. This is a mixture of blood from the tiny incision that is made to insert the Grommet and ear drops that are often instilled at the operation. It can be absorbed by a small piece of cotton wool placed in the opening of the ear canal as needed.

6. Early Discharge from the Ear

10% of patients will have some discharge from the ear following the operation. This is because the “Glue” is often infected and the lining behind the ear drum takes time to revert back to normal again. If the “Glue” is very infected at the time of the operation Mr Beaumont will put antibiotic ear drops (Sofradex) in the ear at the same time and you may need to continue these for 24 hours post op. The discharge can go on for several days but if it does not stop after 3 days then oral antibiotics and further ear drops may be required and you should contact your local GP or Mr Beaumont to get these.

7. Late Discharge from the Ear

Occasionally the ears can discharge some time after the operation , usually in association with a heavy cold. If you develop “runny ears” then ear drops +/- oral antibiotics may be required and you should “mop” the affected ear dry before each dose of drops.

8. Follow up

A check-up and Hearing Test are essential 3 weeks after the operation and you should be given an appointment time when you leave the hospital.

If you have any other problems or concerns, then please phone the Hospital (725241) and speak to a nurse from the ward you were on who will advise you over the phone or contact Mr Beaumont for you.

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