



POST-OPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS **Grommet / Ventilation tube insertion**

Grommets are tiny plastic cylinders placed in the eardrum to try to stop recurrent middle ear infections or hearing loss from glue ear. They are used in patient of all ages, but the majority are placed in children.

There are different types of grommets, but the most commonly used grommets will last, on average 6-12months.

Post grommet insertion

Post insertion, most patient will go home the same day if grommets are inserted as an isolated procedure. Some may stay overnight if it is in conjunction with other surgery.

What can you expect after the surgery?

- A clear or blood-stained discharge from the ear may occur for a few days. Sometimes ear drops are prescribed for a few days after the surgery.
- 20-30% of patients will have some ear discharge over the life of the grommet, please inform your surgeon or GP to gain advice regarding management
- Ear pain is usually mild after grommet insertion alone. Simple pain killers such as paracetamol or ibuprofen are often adequate.
- Patients can return to school or works generally the day after grommet insertion If done as isolated procedure.
- Hearing aids can be worn immediately after grommet insertion.

Aftercare

Keep the ears dry for the first 2 weeks. After this time most patients can get some water in their ears without any issues.

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There are some situations where keeping the ears dry is recommended (it is believed that when unsterile water gets in through the grommet into the middle ear, infection can occur).

- In the bath – soapy water can go through the grommet easily.
- When diving or surfing (head more than 50cm under the surface)
- Ear pain when swimming
- Ear infection or discharge whilst the grommets are in place.

Waterproofing the ears

- Soft silicone ear plugs, ear putty, foam ear plugs can be purchase at any pharmacy.
- Cotton wool with Vaseline placed on the outer surface can be used for showers and baths.
- Specialised ear plugs / custom made ear plugs – designed for swimming, often in conjunction with headband or swimming cap. Please discuss with our staff in the office to assist you with sizing.

Follow up.

- Your first appointment will generally be around 4 to 6 weeks after the surgery.
- Hearing test is usually organised at the same time.
- Further follow up is often done periodically every 9 months until the grommet falls out.
- Majority of patients will not notice the grommet coming out due to its small size.

Be careful to avoid over the counter ear drops as some are not suitable in the presence of a grommet and can be extremely painful