



THE UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA  
MEDICAL CENTER

University Campus

1501 N. Campbell Ave., 50PC  
Tucson, AZ 85724  
Office: (520) 694-1000  
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Home Care Instructions

**Abraham Jacob, M.D.**

**Department of Surgery/Division of Otolaryngology  
Otology, Neurotology, and Cranial Base Surgery**

MEDICAL RECORD#

DOB

NAME

VISIT#

## HOME CARE HANDOUT EAR TUBES

This instruction sheet is designed to help you care for your ear(s) following surgery, and to answer many of the commonly asked questions. ***Please read the entire sheet carefully.*** Feel free to call us with questions or concerns you may have. If the nurse cannot address your concerns, a doctor will return your call or you may be asked to come to the office.

### Leaving the Hospital

- You will receive a prescription for antibiotic ear drops. If instructed to do so, please use them for 5-7 days. Otherwise, keep the script with you for future use. Oral antibiotics are rarely used after tube placement.
- It is recommended that a weight appropriate dose of Tylenol or Ibuprofen be given every 4-6 hours for the first 24 hours.

### Home Care-The first Few Days

- You may return to school or work the day after surgery.
- It is normal for the ear(s) to drain for a few days. The drainage can be blood-tinged, slightly yellow, or clear. A cotton ball can be placed in the ear(s) to absorb the drainage.
- If the drainage becomes thick yellow, green, or has a foul smelling odor, begin using antibiotic ear drops and call Dr. Jacob's office.
- If there is no drainage, leave the ear(s) open to the air.
- **Do not clean the ear canals with cotton swabs.**
- The auricle (outer ear) can be gently wiped with a soft cloth or cotton swabs to remove drainage, but if the ear is tender this is not necessary.
- You may wash hair 2 days after the surgery. **Keep all water out of the ear canal by using a cotton ball coated heavily with antibiotic ointment or Vaseline placed in the outermost part of the ear canal.**
- You may hear a variety of noises in your ear(s) such as cracking or popping. This is normal.
- Hearing usually improves immediately after surgery, but may not be at its best for several weeks.
- It is not uncommon to feel slightly dizzy or lightheaded for up to 1 week after surgery.
- You may fly 3 days following surgery.

### Home Care- After The First Few Days

- Drainage should begin to decrease and pain should also subside.
- When bathing, keep as much water out of the ear(s) as possible. Use a cotton ball coated with ointment or custom made ear plugs.
- You may swim (in chlorinated water only) beginning 10 days after surgery. Diving and deep water swimming should be avoided.
- Ear plugs are recommended if recurrent infections occur following bathing or swimming.
- **If drainage appears at any time in the future:**
  - Begin using the antibiotic drops as directed for 4-7 days.
  - Keep all water out of the ear.
  - Call the office during the next business day.



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### **Your First Follow-up Appointment**

- Call the office (520) 694-1000 for a follow up appointment 1 month after surgery.
- A 3-4 month post-operative visit is also necessary, at which time an audiogram (hearing test) will be obtained. Please let our schedulers know that a hearing test is required immediately prior to seeing Dr. Jacob that day.
- Future follow-up will usually be recommended every 6 months and can usually be performed by your family physician or pediatrician.

### **Call the office if you notice:**

- Increased pain not relieved by Tylenol or Ibuprofen.
- Large amounts of bleeding from the ear.
- Pus/Foul smelling drainage from the ear.
- Redness in the ear area.
- Temperature over 100.5° on 2 consecutive readings.

### **Important Phone Numbers**

#### **University of Arizona Medical Center**

- (520) 694-1000 Dr. Jacob's office - (follow-up appointments)
- (520) 694-1000 Dept. of Surgery Specialty Otolaryngology leave message for nursing station (post-op questions)
- (520) 694-6000 Hospital Operator (after hours questions) Ask for ENT physician on call.