Post-operative Instructions
Myringotomy with Tubes

Procedure/Introduction:
A myringotomy is an incision made in the eardrum to remove middle ear fluid and prevent its recurrence. A small tube is inserted through the eardrum to keep the hole open for a longer time. These tubes usually remain in place for 6 to 18 months and may fall out by themselves.

Post-Operative Care:

General care
Your child’s ear may be slightly sore for the first several hours after the operation. If he/she has pain, you may give the recommended dosage of acetaminophen (Tylenol). There may be some blood-tinged drainage on the cotton placed in the ear after surgery. Drainage is normal for the first 48 hours after surgery.

Diet/Activity
Immediately after surgery, your child will do best with a liquid diet. When he/she is up and acting normally, a regular diet may be started. On the day after surgery, your child may return to usual activity, including school and daycare.

Using ear drops
Drops are prescribed after surgery. Begin using these drops on the evening following surgery, as directed by your doctor.

Place ____ drops of ________________________________
into: ☐ Right ear  ☐ Left ear  ☐ Both ears
____ times each day for ____ days.

Your doctor may recommend additional use of drops after surgery. If the drainage continues for more than seven days, or if other symptoms arise such as fever or pain, please call our office at (415) 353-2148.
When using the drops, warm them first by holding the bottle in the hand for a few minutes. After placing the drops, pump the front of the ear next to the opening of the ear canal several times. This helps to propel the drops into the canal and through the tube. Keep the bottle after you have finished the prescribed amount since you may be able to re-use this medication if your child develops an ear infection (drainage from the ear) in the future.

**Ear infections**

The primary purpose of tubes is to provide additional ventilation to the ear and thereby decrease the frequency of ear infections. However, children with tubes can still develop middle ear infections. Drainage from the ear, which may be thin, thick, or blood-tinged, is the most common sign of infection. Your primary care physician can successfully treat these infections with ear drops. If drainage persists despite ear drops, oral antibiotics may need to be prescribed.

**Water Precautions**

In general, you do not need to use special precautions when exposing your child’s ears to water. Earplugs only need to be used when submerging your child’s head in dirty water (e.g. bath, lake) or if he/she develops infections in clean or chlorinated water.

**Follow-up**

The postoperative nursing staff will call the day following surgery to assess your child’s recovery. You will also need to call the Pediatric Otolaryngology clinic at (415) 353-2757 to schedule a follow-up appointment with a hearing test. If there are any problems or questions that arise before that time, please call the office at (415) 353-2148.