How should I care for my child’s ear after surgery?

- Keep water out of your child’s ear until their follow-up visit with the doctor after surgery.
- Wait at least 2 days after surgery to wash your child’s hair.
- Use cotton balls sealed with Vaseline or ear plugs to keep water out of your child’s ear canal when they take a bath or shower.
- Make sure your hands are clean when doing any ear care.
- Apply ear drops as directed by your doctor.
- Be gentle with your child’s ear.
- Avoid and prevent any hits or bumps while the ear is healing.
- Use cotton in the ear only while sleeping or after ear drops have been put in.
- Avoid strenuous activities for at least 2 weeks or as directed by your doctor.
- You can drive or fly home within 2 days of surgery. Avoid driving over high mountain passes or flying after 2 days post surgery to 4 weeks after surgery.

How should I care for the incision?

There may be stitches behind your child’s ear. These will dissolve. Keep the incision dry for 2 days. After 2 days if there is any blood, debris, or ear drainage on the incision, gently wash it off with mild soap and water then pat dry. Apply antibiotic ointment to the incision 1 to 2 times per day as directed by your doctor.

Some incisions may have a clear plastic (Steri-strips or Tegaderm) dressing. It will come off in about 1 week.

Call your doctor or nurse if there is oozing from the incision, it swells or becomes red.

What should I do if my child has drainage from the ear?

It is normal to have pink or bloody drainage from the ear after surgery. If this happens, you can clean your child’s outer ear and use the ear drops as directed. Often gelfoam (gelatin like material) is placed in the ear canal during surgery. It will slowly come out of the ear over the next few weeks. Call your doctor or nurse if the ear drainage becomes thick, yellow or smells bad.
What should I do if my child has pain?

Your child’s ear will feel uncomfortable for the first few days. Use acetaminophen (Tylenol) or ibuprofen to relieve discomfort. Use this medicine only if recommend by your health care provider. Check with your doctor first before giving any type of medicine to your child. Rest will help, too. If your child has extreme pain or discomfort please call your doctor or nurse.

What should I do if my child catches a cold?

It is hard to avoid colds, but please try. Plenty of rest, a balanced diet, and washing hands often will help. If your child catches a cold, help them to not blow their nose with force. Gently clear all secretions from nose and mouth. Remind your child to sneeze with their mouth open. This will help prevent extra pressure behind the ears.