Myringotomy with or without Tube Insertion

How to prepare and what to expect

This handout explains how to prepare for myringotomy, how it is done and what to expect afterward.

About Your Procedure

A myringotomy is a procedure to treat the buildup of fluid in the middle ear. Your doctor will make an incision in your eardrum to relieve pressure and drain fluid.

How to Prepare

- You may feel dizzy after this procedure. Have someone to ready to drive you home afterward. You might not feel dizzy, but it is best to be prepared.
- You may eat normally and take your regular medicines.

What to Expect

This procedure is done in the clinic. It will last less than 1 hour. This includes your recovery time.

- First, a liquid anesthetic (numbing medicine) is applied to your eardrum.
- Your doctor will then make a small incision in your eardrum and suction out the fluid.
- A small tube may then be inserted through the incision to dry out your middle ear. This helps prevent more fluid from collecting there.

After Your Procedure

Pain

Most patients have very little pain after this procedure. You may take acetaminophen (Tylenol) or ibuprofen (Advil, Motrin), if needed.
Diet
You may eat your usual diet.

Return to Work
You will not need to take time off work after this procedure.

Self-care at Home
Do not allow water to get into your ear until your doctor tells you it is OK.

Follow-up Visit
Your doctor will tell you when you should come to the clinic for a follow-up visit. This visit will be 1 to 2 months after your procedure.

Your follow-up visit is on:

Day ____________________________
Date ___________________________
Time ___________________________

When to Call
Call the clinic nurse or your doctor if you have:

- Fever higher than 101°F (38.3°C)
- Drainage from your ear
- Vertigo (feeling dizzy)