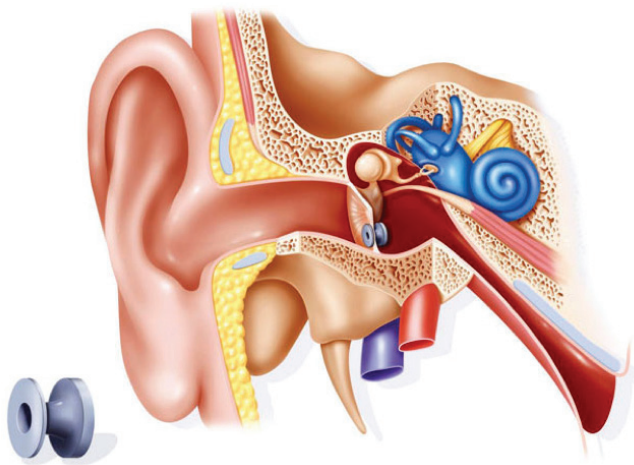


# Ventilating tubes (Grommets)

## What is a Ventilating Tube?

A Ventilating tube (sometimes called a grommet), is a small plastic tube put into one or both ear drums to allow air into the middle ear. The grommet/s in time will fall out and the ear drum/s will heal.

<https://www.earnosethroat.com.au/children-otolaryngology/grommets-in-children/>



## After Surgery

### Length of Hospital Stay

Your child will need to stay in the Paediatric Day Surgery Unit for at least one hour after the surgery.

## At home

### Activity

Your child should reduce their activities for the next 24 hours and have an adult with them while they fully recover from the surgery

Your child will be able to return to child care / school / kindergarten the following day.

## Nausea and vomiting

Do not be worried if your child vomits once or twice after leaving hospital.

If they vomit or feel sick, stop giving food for about an hour. Then try a light diet like toast, and give more as your child can manage without feeling sick.

If your child keeps vomiting, please seek medical attention by either calling your child's surgeon or your nearest emergency department.

## Water Precautions

Water can pass through the grommet into the ear in two ways:

1. When the water is soapy as it is more slippery and can pass easily
2. High water pressure.

Water is not necessarily harmful for the child but it may cause ear pain or a chronic discharging grommet. If this occurs then see your local doctor or discuss with the ENT registrar on call for advice.

## Bathing

Soap and shampoo can be irritating and bath water can become dirty (lots of germs) easily.

To protect the ears from bath water use either;

- cotton wool smeared in Vaseline and put into the opening of the ear canal. Throw away the wet cotton wool after the bath.
- ear plugs (purchased at the chemist) placed into the opening of the ear.

## Swimming

After a few weeks, surface swimming in the sea or in a swimming pool is usually safe with water protection. Swimming in lakes/rivers should be avoided as the water is dirty and may cause infection.

Water protection for swimming includes ear plugs and a swimming cap (can be purchased at most sports stores). DO NOT place any thing else such as Blu-Tak into the ear for protection unless told to do so by the surgeon

Diving into deep water is to be avoided as the pressure can force water through the grommet into the middle ear.

**If your child has pain or discharge from the ear after swimming, contact your doctor.**

## Contacts

If you have any concerns after your child's discharge please see your local doctor, or the ENT registrar on call for Flinders Medical Centre

After hours enquiries - call the Flinders medical centre switchboard on

(08) 82045511 and ask to speak with the Ear Nose and Throat Registrar on call:

**In an emergency situation, call an ambulance or take your child to the nearest doctor or hospital.**

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## For more information

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[www.sahealth.sa.gov.au](http://www.sahealth.sa.gov.au)



This document has been reviewed and endorsed by consumers.