

Preparing your child for grommets



Whether your child is having grommets inserted for hearing loss or recurrent infections, or both, they will need to be prepared for some changes. There are also some important factors to bear in mind.

The operation itself takes less than 30 minutes and you will be there until your child is asleep and before they wake up.

When children have had a hearing impairment, the first few moments after surgery are exciting for everyone but can be overwhelming.

Children may be sensitive to noise for the first few days so it may be worth investing in a pair of ear protectors, particularly for the journey home and for any noisy environments in the days following surgery.



When grommets are inserted it can take up to 2 weeks for them to create a water tight seal, so swimming ear plugs should be worn during any contact with water.

Until the grommets come out and the ear drum heals over, soapy water can pass through them (due to reduced water tension) and so when exposed to soapy water, such as at bath-time; swimming ear plugs need to be worn. It's worth practicing with them before surgery.



Whilst swimming should be fine after the first 2 weeks it's best to wait until after the post operative clinic check up to make sure that they are sitting in the right position.

Swimming ear plugs with a swimming head band over the top, especially if you child is at the stage of jumping or diving into the pool is a good idea.

When grommets first go in, and also sometimes when they fall out (which usually takes around 9 months), the ears can be watery and you may notice moisture on the pillow, if there is no associated pain or temperature and the fluid is scentless then its nothing to worry about.

Half of children that have grommets inserted will need a second set once the first set fall out. This is nothing to worry about as the vast majority will grow out of the need for grommets eventually, but there are signs to look out for. Have the infections returned, are they more distracted in class or do you notice that they are needing the volume turning up at home to hear? If so, its worth booking in for a hearing test.

If the main concern is hearing and there have been no problems with infection then it's important to remember that hearing aids are a good alternative to grommets.



If you think that there is a problem with the grommets, then please let us know so that we can advise on whether a clinic appointment or hearing test is required in the first instance.

MR. JAY GOSWAMY F.R.C.S.
CONSULTANT EAR, NOSE AND THROAT
HEAD, NECK AND THYROID SURGEON