



University
Hospitals Sussex
NHS Foundation Trust

the alex

Grommets



Information for parents and carers

What are grommets?

Grommets are very small plastic tubes that sit in the ear drum. The purpose of a grommet is to keep a hole in the eardrum, which allows air into the middle ear preventing a vacuum occurring. This helps prevent the build up of a thick viscous substance known as 'glue ear' which is responsible for recurrent ear infections and hearing loss.

After the operation

While the grommets are in your child's ear regular follow up appointments and hearing tests may be undertaken. Your appointment will be scheduled. It is essential that your child's ears are kept perfectly dry for a minimum of 2 weeks to allow the grommets to settle and the tiny incision in the eardrum (made to position the grommet) to heal.

You need to be careful when your child is in the bath or the shower or when washing their hair. It is advisable to plug your child's ears with a cotton-wool ball covered in Vaseline.

Your child can start surface swimming a two weeks after the operation; diving under the water is not advised. If your child is a keen swimmer then ear plugs can be obtained from the Audiology Department but you will need to ask your Consultant to complete a referral for this.

A slight clear discharge from the ear is normal in the first day or so but if this discharge continues, becomes thick, smelly or blood stained, please contact your GP. If your child becomes unwell or develops a temperature please contact your GP.

Return to school or playschool can be as soon as you wish. The hospital experience can be tiring and unsettling for children and so they may need one day off school or nursery. To help prevent discomfort your child can have Paracetamol and/or Ibuprofen at the intervals stated on your bottle at home.

Contact details

If you have any questions or concerns please contact the hospital on the following numbers or alternatively you can see your GP.

Level 7 Day Case Unit

01273 696955 Ext. 2381

Monday to Friday 7:30am to 7:30pm

Out of hours

Level 8

01273 696955 Ext. 2552

We will provide you with contact details of your nurse.

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**This leaflet is intended for patients
receiving care in Brighton & Hove
or Haywards Heath.**

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