

INDICATIONS: Myringotomy with tube placement may be recommended by your doctor for repeated ear infections or persistent fluid in the middle ear space. Also, myringotomy tubes may be needed to ventilate the middle ear space for Eustachian tube dysfunction and retracted eardrums. The purpose of the tubes is to keep the middle ear space ventilated so the fluid does not accumulate there and reduce the frequency and duration of infections.

PROCEDURE: A small incision is made in the eardrum, then a very small ventilation tube is inserted into the incision. The procedure is performed with the use of an operating microscope. It is performed during a brief general anesthesia in the operating room for children. For some adults, this can be performed in the office with local anesthesia. It is an outpatient procedure and takes only a few minutes to complete. There is little to no pain caused by the procedure.

HOW LONG DO THE TUBES STAY IN? The tubes usually stay in for about one year. The eardrum slowly pushes the tube (extrudes) into the ear canal and then it falls out of the ear. Sometimes the tube can extrude earlier (a few months after placement) or later than one year; rarely the tubes will need to be removed if they have not extruded after a few (three to four) years.

