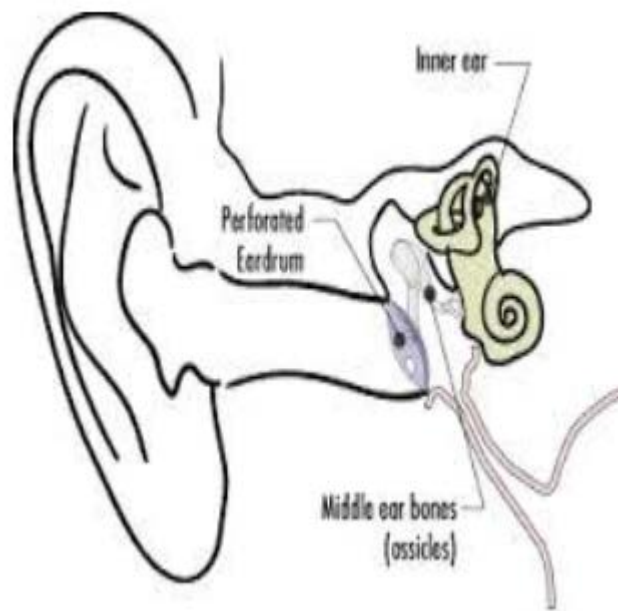

WHAT IS A TYMPANOPLASTY?

A tympanoplasty is an operation to fix a hearing problem caused by a hole in the eardrum or the tiny bones of the middle ear. Your child may need the operation to increase hearing and/or to stop the ear from repeated ear infections. It involves patching up the hole in the eardrum and correcting any damage to the tiny bones that play an important part in hearing.



WHAT DOES THE OPERATION INVOLVE?

Your child will have the operation under a general anesthetic. A small cut may be made behind or in front of the ear to see the eardrum clearly. When possible, the eardrum can be operated on through the ear canal without the small cuts. Next, a piece of tissue from near the ear is used to patch-up the hole in the eardrum. If the tiny bones need repairing, then either an artificial bone or sometimes part of the child's own bone or cartilage can be used. With the help of a microscope, the tissue is put in place carefully using very fine tools. If infection is suspected, the doctor may also explore the mastoid (the air cavity behind the middle ear) during the operation. Inside the

ear, a small sponge like pack / dressing is often left in the ear by the doctor. The sponge is left in for up to 14 days and is removed by the doctor. The removal of the sponge is done in the clinic or may require another general anesthetic. Your doctor will let you know what your child needs.

HOW LONG IS THE OPERATION?

The length of the operation depends on how much needs to be done. It may be as short as 45 minutes for repair of a small hole, or up to 3 hours if more work is needed. Usually, the operation may be done as a day case. This means that your child will have the operation and go home the same day.

WHAT ARE THE RISKS OF THE OPERATION?

All surgeries have a small risk of bleeding during or after the operation. There are risks that are specific to this type of surgery:

- The greatest risk is that the operation does not work; the hole in the eardrum may not heal.
- Hearing may not improve afterwards or may worsen.
- Your child may feel a bit unsteady after the operation, but this is usually temporary.
- An infection may cause earache and drainage from the ear.
- Bleeding may happen under the skin and need attention very soon.

WHAT HAPPENS AFTER THE OPERATION?

Dissolving stitches are used to close the small cuts on the skin. Aside from keeping it dry, you may need to apply cream or ointment onto the cuts. There may also be a bandage or dressing on the ear, which you will need to take off the next morning. A small sponge like pack / dressing is often left inside the ear for up to 14 days. You will need to keep the sponge pack moist by putting antibiotic drops. You will be given a prescription for the antibiotic before you go home. Before leaving the hospital, your nurse will go over care at home instructions with you.