



# EAR SURGERY

## POST OP ADVICE

### Post-Operative Instructions for Ear Surgery

Sometimes the after effects of surgery are quite minimal, so not all these instructions may apply. Common sense will often dictate what you should do. However, when in doubt, follow these guidelines or call our office any time for clarification.

#### Introduction

The following is a list of general instructions for your care following your otoplasty. Please read them carefully several times as most of your questions can be answered here. Carefully following these instructions should help you get the best results from her procedure.

#### Immediately Following Surgery

- An adult should stay with you for at least the first 24 hours after surgery. Rest is absolutely necessary.
- You will be wrapped in dressings that will not be removed until your 5-7 day follow up appointment.
- You should rest with your head elevated in a recliner or with at least 2 pillows for at least the first week after surgery. Try not to sleep on the side of your face but rather sleep with the back of your head on the pillow for about two weeks. Some patients prefer an airline type pillow for comfort. Also popular is the common pillow called a "husband." This is the large pillow that has extensions that go under the arms and supports the patient.
- Take the prescribed pain medications before you begin to feel discomfort. It is easier to prevent pain than control it.
- Restrict your activities the day of surgery and several days afterwards. It is not unusual to require 7 to 10 days before you are feeling back to normal, and before you can resume physical activity.
- Place ice packs over the surgical sites.
- CAUTION: If you suddenly sit up or stand from a lying position you may become dizzy. If you are lying down following surgery, make sure you sit for one minute before standing. Stand up slowly to provide time to steady yourself. If you feel dizzy when you sit or stand, you should lie back down immediately to minimize the possibility of fainting.

## Daily Care

Your dressing after surgery will remain on for 5-7 days. It is important to relax and keep your head elevated the night after surgery. Your dressing will be removed the morning after surgery. At that point we'll review your care: Do not attempt to remove it. Keep it safe. If it looks like it will come off please call the office in office hours or the hospital outside to re-secure it.

- Your headband will be placed over the ears the morning following the removal of your dressing. Please try to wear it at all times where bumping is a possibility for the first 2 weeks following formal dressing removal. This is important to keep your new ears in the correct position. You may shower the day following bandage removal. Be sure to use a gentle shampoo such as Johnson's baby shampoo.
- Be sure to report immediately any signs of bleeding that persist for more than 10 min., infections, redness, fever, unusual drainage, or excessive pain.
- If non-resorbable sutures are used a will be removed on the seventh day after surgery.
- Following 2 weeks, please wear your headband at night until the six-week point.

## What to expect

### Swelling

Swelling will vary from patient to patient. Swelling may actually increase the first 3-4 days before subsiding. Most swelling should resolve over the first 2-3 weeks. Do expect, however, to have minor fluctuations in the remaining swelling over the course of the next 2-3 months. Things to do to minimize the swelling include: Applying cold packs to both ears for the first 3-4 days, keeping your head elevated as much as possible over the first 2-3 weeks, avoiding bending over or heavy lifting for the first 3 weeks, and avoiding prolonged sun exposure for the first 2-3 months.

### Discoloration

Bruising will vary like swelling from person to person. Most bruising and discoloration should resolve over the first 2 weeks.

### Numbness

Your ears may be numb following surgery. This is normal and will subside over the coming weeks to months. Unusual sensations, pins and needles, and occasionally mild discomfort may occur as these nerves regenerate over time.

### Depression

It is not uncommon for patients to go through a period of mild depression after cosmetic surgery. This typically occurs the second week after surgery while some of the swelling and bruising still persist and yet the patient is anxious to see a final result. Realize this is a temporary condition and things will improve. Focus on diligently following the wound care as well as other activities to help divert your mind.

### Restrictions

- No strenuous exercise for at least 2 weeks.
- No heavy lifting for 3 weeks.
- No "pull-over" clothing for 2 weeks.
- Avoid chewing hard foods for 2 weeks.
- No contact sports for 6 weeks.

## Finally

The healing time for ear surgery is often less than expected and the results are worth the wait. While swelling should be completely gone after four to six weeks, your healing will continue for the entire first year. I will follow you through this entire process, but be patient.

- Slight elevation of temperature immediately following surgery is not uncommon. If the temperature persists, notify the office. Paracetamol should be taken to reduce the fever.
- Your case is individual as no two people are alike. Do not accept well intended advice from friends. Not even any two ears are alike. Even yours.
- An appointment will be made 5-7 days after the surgery to check the surgical sites. If you did not receive an appointment please don't hesitate to call our office so we can see you.
- Do not smoke for at least 2 weeks post operatively as smoking significantly delays healing and increases the risk of complications.
- If you have any questions regarding your condition, it is best to call the office during our regular office hours.

We'll guide you through your  
treatment with us

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