

PRE AND POST-OPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS

Otoplasty (Ear Surgery)

Please follow these instructions as closely as possible. They are designed to help you heal quickly, and comfortably, with minimal side effects. If you experience any complications, please call our office.

TWO WEEKS PRIOR TO SURGERY

- Stop the following medications and supplements:
 - All aspirin products
 - All diet aids or appetite suppressants including prescription and herbals products
 - All herbal supplements
 - All high dose individual vitamin supplements (see below for vitamins that can be continued)
 - All BCP's, female hormone supplements herbal or prescription, including creams

Vitamin D, iron, calcium, vitamin B12, vitamin C and single tablet multivitamins may be continued through day of surgery

NIGHT BEFORE SURGERY

- Nothing to eat or drink after 11:00pm the day before surgery.

THE MORNING OF SURGERY

- Take all blood pressure medications that are normally taken in the morning with a small slip of water.
- If you are on oral tablets for diabetes to lower blood sugar, such as Metformin, **do not** take that medication the morning of surgery. If you are on injectable medication for diabetes, such as insulin, check with your surgeon about how the morning insulin should be handled.
- Dress in loose comfortable clothing (ie a shirt that zips or buttons in the front, not a pullover, and comfortable bottoms (pajama, sweat, or lounge pants) and shoes that are easy to slip on.
- **Do not** wear contact lenses, hearing aids, hairpieces, or hairpins. Cellphones should be left with caregiver or family, or at home.
- If at all possible, do not bring personal valuables such as purse, jewelry, cash or wallet.
- Your family or caregiver is welcome to wait for you in the waiting room.

AFTER YOUR SURGERY: THE FIRST 72 HOURS

- You will wake up in recovery room with a recovery room nurse attending to you. They will be at your side to assist with you waking up and can offer medications as needed.
- Sleep with your head elevated for the first two weeks post-operation and preferably on your back as to not lie on your ears.
- Most otoplasty patients have only mild pain or feeling of tightness in their face or neck. It is normal to have some temporary burning discomfort.
- Bruising and mild swelling that is symmetric in nature is normal.
- Small drops of blood and oozing from the incisions are very common the first 24 hours. Commonly there is a drop or two every 1-2 hours in front of and behind the ear. This is normal. This should not be tablespoons of blood and should not be so much that it runs onto clothing: should that occur apply direct pressure to the area and call your surgeon.
- Small ice packs can be used for the ears (15 minutes on and 15 minutes off).
- Mild temperature elevation is very common the first 72 hours after surgery (99-100 degrees F) and is normal. Most temperature elevations respond to walking and doing the breathing exercises. Call your surgeon if any temperature elevation is over 101 F and lasts more than 8 hours.
- Resume all prescription medications, especially blood pressure medications, the night of surgery but certainly no later than the next morning.

INCISION CARE

- Avoid touching or rubbing of ears.
- Leave the dressings on after your ear surgery until your first post-operative appointment or as instructed by your surgeon. After the first set of dressings are off you may get in the shower and get all incisions and your hair wet the day after surgery. We recommend a mild soap such as Johnson's baby shampoo. You may shampoo the hair, just be gentle around the incisions and avoid pulling or rubbing of the ears. After drying off the hair, apply polysporin ointment to all incisions with a Q-tip. It commonly takes several shampoos to get all the dried blood out of the hair: this is normal. Afterwards, you should reapply a thin layer of gauze behind and in front of the ear and then a light ace wrap.
- If using a hair dryer after surgery, do not use the hot or warm setting, as burns may occur due to the skin being numb. Use the cool setting only.
- If any external sutures are present, they are removed at either the first or second post-operative visit.

WHAT TO EXPECT AFTER SURGERY

- Some patients will have a turban like dressing around the head and ears postoperatively. Leave this alone until your first post-operative visit, usually 3-5 days after surgery. Your surgeon will remove this for the first dressing change.
- Maximum swelling after the surgery is usually 24-48 hours after the surgery. Do not apply make-up to any raw or open areas or to an area with an eschar (scab). If you have a question about when exactly you can start, check with your surgeon.
- Hair styling with simple shampoo and blow drying with cool air can occur within days of surgery. Hair coloring normally needs to wait until all incisions have been healed without drainage for a minimum of one week. This point is commonly not reached until 4 weeks post-operation.
- There may be a noticeable ridge in the skin in the front of the ear in the "bowl" which is normal and will resolve with time.

ACTIVITIES AFTER EAR SURGERY

- After the original dressing is removed, it is important to wear a headband (or scarf, or even a winter cap or hat) over the ears for the first 6 weeks, especially at night to prevent pulling on the sutures holding the ears in position. It is okay to take the band off to shower or during the day if you are relaxing and not likely to disturb the operative site.
- Walking every hour or two needs to start when you get home from surgery.
- Avoid lifting (over 20 pounds), bending over, heavy aerobics, weight lifting, and sexual activity for at least 10-14 days after surgery. You may gradually take on those more vigorous activities after 10 days post-operation, but check with your surgeon if you have concerns.
- Traveling by airplane is best to be avoided until after the first post-operative visit. After that point air travel is normally permissible so long as you are careful to avoid heavy luggage lifting until over 10-14 days from surgery. Traveling by car is acceptable immediately after surgery, but long car rides must be broken up every hour for short walks.

WHAT TO CALL FOR

- Significant ear swelling, especially over the size of a grape.
- Nausea and vomiting that persists after 24 hours from surgery.
- Persistent fever over 101 degrees that does not respond to walking and breathing exercises.
- Any severe or increased pain not resolved with the prescribed pain medication.
- Significant bleeding from the incisions that does not respond to 10 minutes of direct, but gentle, pressure.
- Any increased redness around the incision (a few millimeters of redness around the incision is normal however).
- Any yellow or greenish drainage from the incision or a foul odor from the drainage.
- **If you have a serious medical problem unrelated to your surgery, such as sudden onset of chest pain, shortness of breath, sudden loss of control of motion on one side of your body, or sudden slurring of your words, please call 911.**