

Otoplasty (Ear Surgery) Post-Operative Instructions

What are my post-operative instructions?

- Have someone drive you home after surgery and help you at home for 1-2 days.
- Get plenty of rest.
- Follow balanced diet.
- Decreased activity may promote constipation, so you may want to add more raw fruit to your diet, and be sure to increase fluid intake.
- Take pain medication as prescribed. Do not take aspirin or any products containing aspirin unless approved by your surgeon.
- Do not drink alcohol when taking pain medications.
- Even when not taking pain medications, no alcohol for 3 weeks as it causes fluid retention.
- If you are taking vitamins with iron, resume these as tolerated.
- Do not smoke, as smoking delays healing and increases the risk of complications.

What should my activity level be?

- Usually, you will be up and around a few hours after surgery.
- Start walking as soon as possible, as this helps to reduce swelling and lowers the chance of blood clots.
- Do not drive until you are no longer taking any pain medications (narcotics).
- Children can go back to school after 7 days, if they are careful about playground activity.
- Adults can go back to work approximately 5 days after surgery,

depending upon the occupation.

- You may resume full social activities in 5-10 days.
- Avoid any activity in which the ear might be bent for approximately a month.
- You may resume strenuous activity and contact sports in 1-2 months.

How do I take care of my incision?

- Avoid exposing scars to sun for at least 12 months.
- Always use a strong sunblock, if sun exposure is unavoidable (SPF 30 or greater).
- Keep steri-strips on.
- Keep incisions clean and inspect daily for signs of infection.
- Wear turban-style dressings and bandages for 3-4 days. After that, wear a clean headband at night for 3-6 weeks.
- You may shampoo your hair in 5 days, or as advised by your doctor.

How should I expect to feel?

- Temporary throbbing, aching, swelling, redness and numbness.
- Large pressure dressings and bandages are applied around the ears and head, turban style.
- Some swelling and bruising may last 10-14 days.
- Some numbness may exist around the operative areas.
- Tenderness could last up to 3 months.

What will it look like?

- Usually, there will be a faint scar in the back of the ear that will eventually fade.
- Do not expect both ears to match perfectly, as perfect symmetry is unlikely and unnatural in ears.

What follow-up care will I receive?

- All sutures are removed, or will dissolve, in 1-2 weeks.

When should I call my doctor?

- If you have increased swelling or bruising.
- If swelling and redness persist after a few days.
- If you have increased redness along the incision.
- If you have severe or increased pain not relieved by medication.
- If you have any side effects to medications; such as, rash, nausea, headache, vomiting.
- If you have an oral temperature over 100.4 degrees.
- If you have any yellowish or greenish drainage from the incisions or notice a foul odor.
- If you have bleeding from the incisions that is difficult to control with light pressure.
- If you have loss of feeling or motion.
- If a blood clot forms on the ear.

Who should I call if I have questions?

- (734) 998-6022, Monday - Friday, 8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.
- After hours and on weekends, call Hospital Paging at (734) 936-6267 and ask for the Plastic Surgeon on call.

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