

POSTOPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS AFTER EAR SURGERY

Medications:

1. If any antibiotic prescriptions were given to you, please fill them and take all of the medicine according to the instructions.
2. You should also have a prescription for pain medicine. Every patient has a different pain threshold. Don't hesitate to take the pain medicine if you are hurting. You may need to take it around the clock for the first 24 to 48 hours following the surgery and then as needed.
3. You can also take Tylenol or Motrin or Aleve for minor pain. In most cases, the pain improves in several days.
4. Do start your other prescription medications according to your physician's instructions.

Taking Care of Your Ear:

1. First day after surgery: If you have a white dressing in place, please remove it about 24 hours after the surgery. Also, remove the cotton ball sitting near the ear canal which will be easily seen. Some dried blood on the ear or behind the ear is normal. Any metal staples, thread-like sutures, or small beige strips should be left in place as it will be removed or checked during your first postop appointment. Gently clean with a soft washcloth and warm water or peroxide.
2. Three days following surgery: You may now take a shower and allow your hair to get wet. If there is an incision behind the ear you can get this wet when bathing or showering. Please do not allow any water to get in the ear canal. You can take a cotton ball and coat it with petroleum jelly (Vaseline) to create a nice waterproof seal and place it in the ear canal.
3. During the first week after surgery: Some slight swelling around the ear or face can occur within the first 2 to 3 days after surgery. You can place ice packs on the area if this occurs. Sleep with your head above the level of the heart and avoid lying down on the same side as the surgery ear during the first week because swelling or throbbing may increase.
4. You may apply Bacitracin ointment twice a day on the incision site near the outer ear and/or apply it to a cotton ball for the ear canal.
5. Please keep a cotton ball in the ear and change it whenever it has drainage on it. It is normal for the cotton ball to have some drainage on it for several days or even a few weeks after surgery. It should gradually lessen over time from red, to light yellow to clear. You may also notice some popping or crackling sounds in the ear which is due to the drainage and/or ointment in the ear. This is all normal.
6. It is normal for the ear to feel plugged, and for there to be some ringing , imbalance, or even some disturbance in taste for several days after ear surgery.
7. Cotton tipped applicators like Q-tips should not be used in your ears due to risk of rupturing your eardrum or interfering with the natural clotting and healing process.

Activity/ Returning to Work:

1. For the first month after surgery, you will need to follow some general guidelines:

- A. No lifting over 5-10 pounds ie, book bags , grocery bags, children ,etc.
- B. No bending at the waist. Instead, bend at the knees and hips while keeping your upper body straight up.
- C. No straining while having a bowel movement. Take stool softener if needed.
- D. Wipe your nose, but do not blow your nose.
- E. Sneeze through your open mouth.
- F. No flying in planes for a month unless approved by the doctor.
- H. Avoid taking the elevators over 10 stories high unless approved by your doctor.

2. Typical recovery time before resuming all previous activities is one month. Some people may return to work or school within a week after surgery if they have a sedentary lifestyle. Those who are physically and/or exercise at work, home, or school, you will need to wait the full month or receive clearance from the doctor prior to resuming these types of activities to be sure you have completely healed from the surgery. Call us if you need forms to be completed for activity restrictions, returning to work, or school.

Call if you notice the following:

- 1. Heavy bleeding that won't stop despite light pressure for 5-10 minutes with a dressing over the area.
- 2. Dark yellow-green, foul smelling discharge with increased pain, swelling and redness of the surgical area.
- 3. Sudden reduction of hearing.
- 4. Sudden facial numbness or paralysis on one side when they were fine or getting better after surgery.
- 5. Respiratory infection, sinus infection, fever over 101 F.
- 6. Inability to tolerate fluids due to excess nausea and/or vomiting.

Follow up:

- 1. Call soon to schedule your first post-op visit in 3 to 4 weeks after the surgery date.
- 2. For an appointment at Oakbrook Terrace call 630-953-6600.
- 3. For an appointment at Mulcahy in Maywood call 708- 216-8563.

Contact numbers:

If you have any questions or concerns please call one of the following numbers:

ENT Nurse Triage office at 708-216-9183 from 9am to 4pm, Mon. thru Fri.

ENT Office at 708-216-9183 from 8:30am to 5pm, Mon. thru Fri.

Physician Answering Service at 708- 216-8000 after 5pm, Mon.-Fri.and weekends.