

Post operative instruction for Tympanoplasty

Diet

In the immediate post-operative period, the patient may experience some vertigo, nausea or vomiting. It is therefore preferable to stick to a liquid diet or a light bland meal. A regular diet may be resumed the day after surgery. It is not unusual to experience some earache on mastication and possibly, some difficulty in fully opening the mouth.

Wound Care

The operated ear is usually packed and full of blood. It will feel clogged, and you may hear crackling sounds. On the side of the operated ear, the temple, and the region around the orbit (eye) may become a little swollen. If you have a dressing wrapped around the head or sutures behind the ear, please keep that dressing dry and avoid water at any cost. In general, such a dressing is removed a couple of days after the surgery. If you have a cotton ball in the ear, change it when it gets soaked and replace it with a clean cotton ball. It is not necessary to use a band aid or adhesive tape to hold the cotton ball. Use a little antibiotic ointment to make the cotton ball stick.

1. **Do not allow any water to enter the operated ear.** Protect the ear when showering or washing the hair with a cotton ball coated with Vaseline. It is a good idea to have someone help you with washing the scalp to avoid water. When finished washing, remove the coated cotton, wipe the ear with a soft paper tissue and place a clean, dry cotton ball. A little antibiotic ointment may help the cotton ball stick and stay in place. A shower cap provides extra protection. You can wash the incision behind the ear after 48 hours.
2. **Thick, dark or bloody ear drainage is expected during the first week after surgery.** You may clean the crusting from the outer part of the ear with peroxide and Q-tips. Replace the cotton ball in the ear with a clean, dry piece when the current one is soiled. Occasionally, you may see brown or dark red pieces of packing (Gelfoam) extruding from the ear canal. Do not attempt to replace them or to remove the remaining pieces that are still in the ear canal.
3. Do not blow your nose for at least two weeks from the day of surgery. Blowing can build excessive pressure in the operated ear and displace the reconstructed or grafted eardrum.
4. If you have to sneeze, please do it with your mouth wide open to avoid pressure build up in your ear.
5. When sleeping, try to sleep on the unoperated ear.

Medications

Antibiotics are not usually prescribed but may be in some instances. You may take pain medication as needed. Pain medications cause drowsiness, somnolence, nausea and constipation. Please refrain from driving, operating machinery or making important decisions when taking painkillers. You will usually start using the prescribed ear drops 1 week after surgery and continue the drops for 2 weeks.

Activity

You may start walking the day of surgery and resume normal activities as you can tolerate. Most patients are able to return to work in 5-7 days. No vigorous exercise for 2 weeks and no weightlifting for 4 weeks. No flying on an airplane for 4 weeks. No swimming for 4 weeks. No scuba diving for 3 months.

Follow-up

If you have a wrap-around dressing or a dressing sutured behind the ear, you may remove the dressing at home after 24 hours. You should be seen about 7-10 days after surgery in the office. During this appointment we may use a microscope and suction to partially clean out the ear. This appointment should have been made by your doctor's **Surgery Coordinator** at the time of scheduling the surgery. If you are unsure if you have a post operative appointment scheduled, please reach out to your doctor's **Surgery Coordinator** to verify your post operative appointment.

Contact our office and report any:

- Excessive headache, severe attacks of dizziness or vertigo or intractable vomiting
- Temperature above 102 degrees that DOES NOT respond to Tylenol or Motrin. The fever may go up and down, but as long as it responds to Tylenol or Motrin, it is OK to monitor.
- Facial paralysis (Inability to close the eye and crooked smile like in Bell's Palsy)

We are unable to refill your medications on weekends or after hours.

For prescription refills, please call during office hours:

Monday-Friday: 8:30 am – 4:30 pm