

Otoplasty Before and After Surgery Instructions

Otoplasty is a safe, effective procedure performed to restore balance and proportion of your ears. As with all facial plastic surgery, a thorough health assessment and realistic expectation are pre-requisites. Your understanding of instructions and routines is essential to a successful final result.

Ear surgery, or otoplasty, is usually done to set prominent ears back closer to the head or to reduce the size of large ears. The incisions are behind the ear and the cartilage is shaped with sutures. This is often performed on children after the age of four; however, many adults opt to have ear surgery to rectify life-long concerns and improve self-image.

Before Surgery

At your pre-operative appointment, our nurse will provide all the instructions for you to follow before and after surgery. We will call the day before to confirm your time to arrive for surgery. Otoplasty surgery takes about 2-3 hours. Recovery time takes about an hour and we will call your ride about half an hour before you are ready to go.

Pre-Operative Instructions

1. Please avoid any aspirin, aspirin-containing products or ibuprofen (Advil, Aleve, Motrin, etc.) for 1-2 weeks prior to and 2 weeks following your surgery. See our "Medication List" for products to avoid prior to surgery. If you are on any medications that affect bleeding (Coumadin/Plavix) please notify the office immediately.
2. Please refrain from tobacco products and alcohol for 2 weeks prior and 3 weeks following surgery. Delayed wound healing, persistent skin redness and other complications may persist when tobacco and alcohol are not discontinued.
3. Please notify us of all routine medications and your health history. We ask that you remain on your daily medications unless instructed otherwise. At the pre-operative appointment, our nurse will tell you which daily medications to take the morning of surgery.
4. At your pre-operative appointment, you will be given prescriptions for use before and after surgery including an oral antibiotic and pain medications. Please obtain the prescriptions before your surgery and bring them with you the day of the procedure.
5. We will ask you to take Arnica 10-14 days before and 7 days after surgery; a natural herb that significantly decreases bruising, follow directions on bottle. We will also ask you to take 1500 mg of vitamin C, which helps promote healing. You may also be asked to take an antibiotic the day of surgery.

Day of Surgery

1. You may not eat or drink after midnight the evening before the surgery unless instructed otherwise.
2. You may brush your teeth.
3. Wear a zip-up or button up shirt and slip on shoes.
4. Wash face and hairline with antibacterial shampoo. Do not apply creams or make-up and **DO NOT USE HAIR STYLING PRODUCTS.**
5. It is not required that a family member or friend stay at the Centre during your surgery. However, we will need a number where they can be reached. Someone must to drive you home after your surgery and stay with you that evening. Transportation to the office the day following surgery is also required.

After Surgery

As you become more aware after surgery you will notice a soft, bulky head wrap dressing and that your hearing will be muffled. Following your surgery the nurse will ask you to meet the discharge criteria: drink liquids, walk with a steady gait, void and manage your discomfort. The nurse will also go over all post-op instructions with the person caring for you. Assistance for the first 2 days is strongly recommended.

Post-Operative Instructions

Day after Surgery

1. You will be asked to come to our office the following day for a dressing change

First 48 Hours

1. Keep head elevated at a 45 degree angle
2. You may bathe but avoid getting the dressing wet.
3. Reduce activity to decrease any chance of bleeding or the incision opening, swelling and nausea. You may get out of bed to use the bathroom. Swelling, bruising and discomfort are very normal symptoms after your surgery.
4. Take medications as directed

Wound Care

1. Keep the dressing dry and intact the evening after surgery.
2. After the dressing is removed you may shower and wash hair, however, avoid swimming, hot tubs or soaking of the surgical sites for 2 weeks.
3. Cleanse the suture areas with a q-tip dipped in peroxide and then applying the antibiotic ointment daily. Sutures that have been kept lubricated with ointment are less painful to remove. Keep the dressing in place at all times other than for suture care.

Medications

Most patients complain of discomfort more than pain. Use pain medication as directed or needed and taking with food helps minimize nausea associated with pain medications. **DO NOT DRIVE OR DRINK ALCOHOL WHILE TAKING THE PAIN MEDICATION.**

Bleeding

A small amount of bleeding on the dressing is normal. If you have persistent bleeding relax and reduce activity. If bleeding persists call our office 904.810.5484, or call Dr. Leake on her cell phone.

Healing Care

1. Rest, both physically and mentally, and adequate nutrition are important factors in healing.
2. Numbness, tingling, swelling, itching, discoloration, bumpiness, hardness, crusting, tightness, and redness around the incisions are normal and should go away with full healing.
3. Avoid sun exposure as much as possible for 3 months, as it can cause swelling or an uneven change in pigmentation. Wear a hat and sunscreen if you have to be out in the sun.
4. You are encouraged to take a shower 48 hours after surgery
5. After your suture removal, Steri-strips are applied and bruising can be camouflaged 1 week after surgery with make-up. Always protect your face from the sun. At this point, a hat and sunglasses are a good idea. Following surgery, our staff will tell you when it is okay to apply sunscreen, cosmetics, or facial creams

*Full healing takes 2-4 months.

Diet

Advance your diet from liquids to soft foods such as, oatmeal or yogurt or soup to your regular diet as tolerated.

Activity

Rest for the entire day of surgery. Sleep with the head of the bed elevated or use 2-3 pillows for one week after surgery. Absolutely no bending, lifting, or straining. If you have little children, bend at the knees or sit on the floor and let them climb on your lap. No driving for one week following surgery. Two weeks off work is recommended.

Final Result

Following your otoplasty surgery it takes time for the swelling to subside and for the skin to heal. Most patients return to work in 2 weeks following surgery; however, 3 weeks is ideal, depending on the degree of privacy one is trying to maintain.

Please call the office 904.810.5434 and ask for our nurse if you have any concerns. For an emergency after normal business hours please call Dr. Leake on her cell phone, 904.687.3651