

OTOPLASTY POST OPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS

Introduction

The following is a list of general instructions for your care following your Otoplasty. Please read them carefully several times as most of your questions should be answered here. Carefully following these instructions should help you get the best results from your surgery.

Daily Care

Your dressing after surgery will remain on until the following morning. It is important to relax and keep your head elevated the night after surgery. Your dressing will be removed the morning after surgery. At that point we will review your care:

1. Go over suture lines behind the ears three times daily with hydrogen peroxide on a cotton swab. After this, again with a cotton swab, apply a liberal amount of Vaseline or Bacitracin ointment. The stitches behind the ears are dissolvable, and keeping them lubricated helps quicken the process.
2. Your headband will be placed over the ears the morning following surgery. Please wear the headband at all times the first two weeks following surgery. This is important for keeping your ears in position. You may shower the second day following surgery, but baths are a better choice for most people. Be sure to use a gentle shampoo, such as Johnson's Baby Shampoo.
3. Be sure to report immediately any signs of bleeding that persist for more than ten minutes, infections, redness, fever, unusual drainage or pain.
4. Stitches will be removed the seventh day after surgery.
5. Please wear your headband at night until the six-week point.

What to expect

Swelling

Swelling will vary patient-to-patient. Swelling may actually increase the first three to four days before subsiding. Most of your swelling should resolve over the first week. Do expect, however, to have minor fluctuations in the remaining swelling over the course of the next two to three weeks. Things to do to minimize this swelling include keeping your head elevated as much as possible over the first two to three weeks, avoiding bending over or heavy lifting for the first three weeks, and avoiding prolonged sun exposure for the first month.

Discoloration

Bruising will vary like swelling from patient-to-patient. Most bruising and discoloration should resolve over the first two weeks. Makeup, with Dr. Hamilton's permission, can be applied ten days to two weeks after surgery.

Numbness

Your ears may be numb following surgery. This is normal and will subside over the coming weeks to months. Unusual sensations, pins and needles, and occasionally mild discomfort may occur as these nerves regenerate over time.

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Depression

It is not uncommon for patients to go through a period of mild depression after cosmetic surgery. This typically occurs the second week after surgery while some of the swelling and bruising still persist and yet the patient is anxious to see a final result. Realize this is a temporary condition and things will improve. Focus on diligently following the wound care as well as other activities to help divert your mind.

Restrictions

1. No strenuous exercise for at least two weeks.
2. No heavy lifting for three weeks.
3. No "pull-over" clothing for two weeks.
4. Avoid hard chewing foods for two weeks.
5. No contact sports for six weeks.

Finally

The healing time for ear surgery is often less than expected and the results are worth the wait. While swelling should be completely gone after four to six weeks, your healing will continue for the entire first year. I will follow you through this entire process, but be patient.

Please do not ever hesitate to contact our office.

Mark M. Hamilton, M.D., F.A.C.S.

Signature

Printed Name

Date