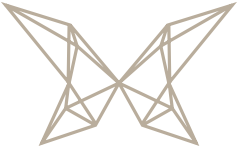


Postoperative Instructions

EAR SURGERY (OTOPLASTY)

Dr Rory Dower



Postoperative Instructions

EAR SURGERY (OTOPLASTY)

You have undergone a surgical procedure in a day clinic setting and will spend some time in recovery, before being discharged home. If this procedure is combined with other procedures, you may require an overnight stay. It is important for you to arrange to have either a friend or family member drive you home and stay with you for the first 24 - 48 hours.

What to Expect

IMMEDIATELY AFTER SURGERY

- Despite feeling tired and sore for a few days, you should be up and about the day after surgery
- Maximum discomfort will occur in the first few days
- Your ears will be swollen and bruised postoperatively. The bruising will usually settle in about 1-2 weeks, but the swelling will take longer to resolve
- Sometimes pain, swelling or bruising may be slightly different between the two sides. Although this is usually normal, if a great difference develops between the two sides, please contact Dr. Dower's rooms
- You may experience some numbness of the operative areas. This will settle with time

Medication and Handling pain

- You may recommence your normal medication the day after surgery unless otherwise advised
- Take pain medication as prescribed.
- In order to "break" the pain cycle, we recommend taking the pain meds regularly, as prescribed, for the first 3 days, even if discomfort is only mild
- Do not take aspirin or any products containing aspirin for the week following surgery, unless this is for a medical condition, in which case please discuss this with Dr Dower
- Do not drink alcohol when taking pain medication

Wound Care, Stitches, Dressings And Drains

- The sutures are dissolvable
- You will have a dressing wrapped around your head and ears, which will need to remain in place for 7 – 10 days. This must be kept dry. If it should slip or fall off it needs to be replaced.
- Please bring a sweat headband with you on the day you return for the removal of the bandage. This will be worn at night for 4 weeks after removal of the bandage

Showering and Bathing

- You can start showering and washing the hair once the bandage is removed at around 1 week. Before this you can wash in a shallow bath with a wet cloth, making sure not to get the head dressing wet
- No bathing or soaking the incision site for the first 2 weeks

Sleeping

- When lying down or sleeping use extra pillows to prop yourself up for the first 1-2 weeks. This will help with the swelling.

Smoking and Alcohol

- Avoid smoking for the first 4 weeks after surgery as smoking delays healing and increases the risk of complications
- Avoid alcohol for at least 72 hours after surgery, as this may increase your risk of bleeding

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Postoperative Instructions | Ear Surgery (Otoplasty)

Level of Activity and Exercise

- Start walking as soon as possible after surgery to reduce the risk of blood clots in your lower legs
- Although you can gently walk about and do light duties, please avoid any excessive stretching or lifting during the first 7 to 10 days
- You may choose to return to work after 7-14 days
- You may resume light exercises at around 2 weeks and your normal exercise routine at around 4 weeks
- Body contact sports should be avoided for 6-8 weeks
- Resume sexual activity as comfort permits, usually 2-3 weeks post-operatively
- Do not drive until you are no longer taking narcotic pain medication
- If you are doing something that is causing you pain, this is usually the body's natural warning system to take it easy and not over exert yourself

Diet

- Everyone recovers from their anesthetic differently. Some people feel no side effects while others are more noticeably affected, feeling tired and even sick for the first couple of days
- Eat lightly with small meals throughout the day to minimize sickness
- Drink plenty of fluids in the form of water and fresh juices, in the first few days after surgery
- Avoid caffeine and carbonated drinks for the first few days

What to Wear

- It is best to wear comfortable, loose, front opening clothing that does not need to be pulled over your head for the first few weeks

Scar Management

- A scar takes 9-12 months to reach full maturity at which stage the final result will be evident.
- The scars may become a little more pink and noticeable, even red and lumpy temporarily before they start to improve.
- Avoid exposing scars to sun for at least 12 months. Always use a strong sunblock, if sun exposure is unavoidable (SPF 50 or greater)
- Scar science can be used to improve the appearance of the scar. You can start applying this from 6 weeks post-operatively. For the first 2-6 weeks of treatment, the cream should be applied over the Micropore tape. After this, it can be applied directly to the scar. For the scar science to have a beneficial effect, it should be used for a period of at least 6 months from the date of surgery. After 1 year the scar has reached maturity and there is no further benefit
- If not using scar science, you can apply Micropore tape to the incisions for 6 months, changing this every 7 to 10 days. Do not remove the tape every day as it will cause irritation of the surrounding skin. Incision areas may be massaged over the Micropore tape to help improve the scar
- Local massage to the scar is usually begun at around 4 weeks. Use your normal body lotion creams or Bio-Oil to facilitate this action
- Do not use any creams containing Vitamin E to treat the incision areas for the first 3 months

When should I call?

- Fresh bleeding, other than that of a minor nature
- Pain not relieved by pain relieving tablets
- Sudden onset new and worsening pain
- Excessive swelling or redness
- Increased redness along the incision sites
- Discharge or foul odour from the incision sites
- Fever of 38 degrees Celsius or above
- Any side effects to medications; such as, rash, nausea, headache or vomiting
- Increased pain in your calves, shortness of breath, or chest pain