

Century Ear, Nose and Throat Head and Neck Surgery

Brian P. Farrell, M.D. *Philip D. Kooiker, M.D.*
Silvio Marra, M.D. *Curtis G. Walsh, M.D.* *Nirav N. Thakkar, M.D.*

16001 South 108th Avenue · Orland Park, IL 60467
Phone: (708) 460-0007 · FAX: (708) 460-0007

POST-OP INSTRUCTIONS FOR EAR SURGERY (Mastoidectomy, Tympanotomy, Ossicular Reconstruction)

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 dressing wrapped around the head, 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 during showering or washing the hair with a large cotton ball coated with Vaseline. 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.
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. When sleeping, try to sleep on the unoperated ear.

Medications: Antibiotics are usually prescribed. Please take them as directed until they are all gone. 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.

Follow-up: If you have a wrap-around dressing, please make an appointment in one day to have it removed. Call (708) 460-0007 for an appointment.

Contact our office and report any: Excessive headache, severe attacks of dizziness or vertigo, or intolerable vomiting. Temperature above 102 degrees. Facial paralysis (inability to close the eye and crooked smile like in Bell's Palsy).

For prescription refills, please call during office hours:
Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday 9:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.
Wednesday, Saturday 9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.