

Tympanoplasty/ Mastoidectomy - Post Operative Instructions

Surgery

Tympanoplasty (with or without mastoidectomy) involves a brief anesthesia, typically 1 to 2 hours. Patients may be irritable for several hours after surgery. If sedatives were given, some patients will remain sleepy for much of the day. You may have nausea or vomiting, but it usually goes away by the evening of surgery without additional medication.

Medication

You will be given pain medication to use as needed after surgery. Pain is usually not severe and regular Tylenol can be taken for mild pain as long as it's not taken with prescription pain medication.

You may be given an antibiotic to take as directed for the week after surgery.

You may be given Bacitracin ointment to use on the incision behind the ear. This prevents itching as the sutures dissolve.

You will be given a prescription for eardrops. Use the eardrops as directed by your surgeon.

Effects of Surgery

- There may be an incision behind the ear. Some surgeons use sutures, and others use tape or skin glue over the incision
- The dressing should provide gentle pressure. If it's too tight or feels like a vice grip on the forehead, loosen the Velcro straps in the front
- Remove the dressing 24 hours after surgery, replace the cotton ball on the ear and change it as needed. A Band-Aid is a good way to keep the cotton ball on the ear
- You may use the dressing with gauze if it's more comfortable while sleeping
- You may shower and get the incision wet (without scrubbing it) 3-7 days after surgery. Your surgeon will let you know when this is recommended
- Keep the ear (canal) dry during baths or showers (place cotton ball with Vaseline or Bacitracin on it) to prevent water from getting in the ear for the next month
- There is absorbable packing placed in the ear canal and behind the eardrum during surgery. You may see the packing (or what looks like ear drainage) from the ear canal. This may look bloody or brown, which is normal. The packing behind the eardrum will dissolve over time but this takes several weeks to months. Until the packing is completely gone, there will be muffled hearing in the surgical ear. Some patient's notice their heartbeat heard in the ear or their speech echoing in the ear. This is also normal

Limitations

- NO SWIMMING until cleared by your surgeon
- No nose blowing, straining, or strenuous activity until your surgeon gives you clearance. This restriction can range from 1-3 weeks depending on the surgery
- Try to sneeze with your mouth open for the first several weeks after surgery

Reasons to Call Your Surgeon's Office

- Persistent fever over 101° F
- Pain that is not relieved by your medications
- Drainage of pus from the incision or ear canal
- Redness or swelling surrounding the incision behind the ear that is worsening or getting bigger