

Matt Robertson, MD
Alpine Ear, Nose, & Throat

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EAR SURGERY
POSTOPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS

Cotton

Change the cotton in your ear once or twice per day until the ear packing is removed (generally 2-3 weeks post-op). After the packing has been removed in the office cotton should not be worn routinely in the ear, even though the ear may continue to drain for up to six weeks post-op.

Wound

There may be bloody or watery drainage from the incision area for 1-2 weeks following surgery. If this happens, tape a piece of gauze behind the ear. Clean the incision area with a solution of ½ Hydrogen Peroxide and ½ water on a Q-tip 2-3 times a day. Apply Bacitracin ointment to the incision area after cleansing.

No water in the ear

Keep water out of the external ear canal until the ear is healed (at least 4 weeks). Plan to take a bath rather than a shower until healing is complete. If an incision has been made behind your ear do not get the incision wet for at least 2 days post-op. If possible have someone help you wash your hair in the sink and hold a cup over the ear to protect the incision until the tape has been removed.

Activity

Plan to stay relatively quiet at home for the first three days after the surgery. Then you may drive and do light housework, go to movies, etc. Avoid heavy lifting (25 lbs. or more) or bending forward for 14 days. No vigorous activities such as heavy manual labor, lawn mowing, or athletics for three weeks.

Nose blowing

DO NOT BLOW YOUR NOSE more than just gently. If you sneeze, sneeze with your mouth open.

Airplane trips

It is inadvisable to fly until the eustachian tube is functioning normally (approximately three weeks post op). If planning to fly, please call the office for instructions.

Hearing

Your external canal will be packed with a special ointment and sponge packing for 2-3 weeks postoperatively. After the packing is removed, you will not hear properly until the ear has completely healed and is functioning (2-3 months). During the postoperative period you will hear unusual sounds, such as squishing, crackling, bubbling and popping. Do not become alarmed if your hearing fluctuates — that is expected. You also may experience mild dizziness or unsteadiness with rapid head movements in the immediate postoperative period. If you develop vertigo (spinning) or severe tinnitus (noise) which lasts for more than one hour please call the office.

Appointment

Please call to make an appointment for 1 week and again at 3-4 weeks after surgery. You will usually be seen at two week intervals until the ear is healed. A postoperative audiogram will be obtained at 2-3 months after surgery when the ear is completely healed.