

## **OTOPLASTY: “EAR PINNING” POST-OPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS**

### **General Instructions**

- After surgery, please have someone stay with you for the first 24 – 48 hours.
- Sleep with your head elevated to help with swelling. Sleep with several pillows or a wedge pillow.
- Drink water to stay hydrated. Eat a softer diet for the first week.
- Walking at least 6 times a day is recommended for general well-being and prevention of blood clots. You may need assistance when walking at first to prevent falls.
- No “pull-over” clothing for 2 weeks. Wear clothing that buttons at the front or zips.
- Do not lift over 5 lbs for 2 weeks. Avoid bending over for 2 weeks. Head dressing 24 hours a day for 2 weeks (nighttime for 6-8 weeks).
- You may resume contact sports in approximately 8 weeks.
- Typically, there will be a scar in the back of the ear that will slowly fade over the course of one year.
- Do not expect both ears to exactly match, as perfect symmetry is unlikely and unnatural.

### **Medication Instructions**

- Take medications as prescribed.
- Tylenol is recommended as the primary pain relief medication. Check the label on your bottle to remain aware of dosages. Opioids can be used for breakthrough pain. They should be weaned within 1 week. Take pain medication with food. Some patients only require Tylenol, but everyone is different. No more than 3 grams of Tylenol should be taken in 24-hour period.
- You may develop constipation when taking opioid pain medications. Continue drinking plenty of fluids. Take Colace twice a day starting on day 1. You may take your preferred over the counter bowel regimen as well. You should have regular bowel movements. You should avoid straining.
- Do not drive while taking any opioid pain medication. Use caution with opioid medications as they have addictive potential. Do not use other sedative medications, sleep aids, or alcohol in the post-operative setting.

### **Wound Care and Dressings**

- You may take a bath or shower 48-72 hours after surgery. Do not get your head or dressings wet.
- Keep the dressings in place until your follow up appointment. The surgical team will remove the dressing at your first post-operative visit.
- Wear chinstrap or head band dressings 24 hours a day for the first 14 days. This is important to keeping your new ears in position. If you can wear the headband in the daytime for more than 14 days, please do so.
- You must wear a clean headband at night for 6-8 weeks.
- After you have your dressings removed by us, you may shower and get the ears wet. Do not let the shower stream directly hit your ears. Although, you may let water gently run over your wound. Gentle baby shampoo is preferred in the first 2-3 weeks after surgery. Do not rub or scrub near the ears.
- Wear a headband or the surgical band provided over the ears for 6-8 weeks after surgery when sleeping or during activities.
- No pools, hot tubs, or submerging in bodies of water for 4 weeks.
- If steri-strips are covering your wound, leave these in place. If they fall off, you may leave them off.
- Do not pull or trim any visible suture strings. Do not pull on steri-strips.
- Eyeglasses can be worn after your surgery if you need them but use your dressings to support them. Do not place the glasses on top of or behind your ears as you normally would.

### **Call us if...**

- If you are unable to keep fluids or medications down due to vomiting.
- If you have shaking chills, fever greater than 101.5 (F) degrees or 38 (C) degrees, increased redness, swelling or discharge from incision, chest pain, shortness of breath, or anything that is troubling you.
- For questions outside hours, call the main hospital line 617-667-7000. Ask to speak with plastic surgery.

### **Purchases to consider**

- Tylenol
- Comfortable head bands that cover the ears completely. These will be worn for 6-8 weeks.
- Miralax or other bowel regimen to have on hand if you develop constipation
- Baby shampoo for gentle hair washing in the initial post-operative period
- Well balanced diet including vegetables and protein for the healing period. Softer foods are recommended,
- Pillows or a wedge to keep the head elevated while sleeping.
- Button-up or zip-front tops to be worn in the post-operative period.

### **Follow up**

- Your first clinic follow-up after surgery will be within 1 week. If you do not have an appointment scheduled, please call the clinic to schedule an appointment. At your clinic visit, the dressings will be removed.
- Please contact us for any serious change in your symptoms, or any new symptoms that concern you.
- The Plastic Surgery Clinic phone number is: 617-632-7827



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