

## Myringoplasty (Ear drum repair) with or without Mastoidectomy

### Post-op Course

You may be discharged on the day of surgery or stay overnight. This will depend on your operation as well as your surgeon's preference. You will generally expect your ear to be blocked, as there will often be dressings packed within your ear canal. The dressings used may be either dissolvable or may need removal by your surgeon 1-3 weeks from your surgery (depending on type of surgery). If your surgery was done via a cut behind the ear, you'll expect to wake up with a head bandage that is removed the following day.

If your surgery is done as a day-procedure, you will be advised to remove the bandage and all dressings down to the white steri-strip bandaids behind the ear the day after the operation.

It is important that you leave the dressings dry and keep your ear dry after your surgery. It is common for some minor blood-stained discharge from your ear canal and occasionally from behind the ear as well.

A cotton wool ball with a layer of Vaseline can be placed over the outside of your ear canal to minimise the discharge running from the ear. This can be changed as necessary. However be very careful **NOT** to dislodge or remove any of the dressings placed inside your ear canal. If the cotton wool gets stuck onto the inner dressing, stop pulling and get someone to help you gently ease it away or snip the end with clean scissors. **The ear canal packing should only be removed by your surgeon.**

Please leave this dry and undisturbed. Occasionally, your ear may be packed again during your post-operative visit. If the plug falls out of the ear on its own, do not worry, just leave the deeper layers of packing alone.

There may be stitches either on top of the ear canal or at the back of your ear. These are generally dissolvable and do not need removing.

## Medications

You will often be discharged with antibiotics after your surgery. If they have been prescribed complete the whole course as instructed. You may also be prescribed ear drops. These usually commence on the first day after surgery once the bandage has been removed.

Pain after this type of surgery is usually mild to moderate and is very well controlled with pain medication. Generally the use of Nurofen and paracetamol/panadeine forte is adequate.

If you had medications such as aspirin, Plavix or warfarin stopped prior to surgery, please check with your surgeon when it is safe to restart these. It is advisable that you check with your surgeon prior to your discharge but occasionally a decision may have to be made only at your first post-operative visit.

You may be prescribed further ear drops during your post-operative visits after removal of packing from your ear. Instructions will be given with regards to use and generally this is to help with clearance of the dissolvable dressing placed within your ear.

## Precautions during your post-operative course

It is important that you don't strain or do any heavy lifting for 4-6 weeks after your surgery. Some pain medications can cause constipation so it is advisable that you get some stool softeners/laxatives from your local chemist within 2 days if you are having problems (Your local chemist will be very familiar with constipation treatment). This is so you can minimise straining which may affect the healing of the graft on your ear drum. You may need to go on light duties if your work involves manual labour and lifting (please discuss this with your surgeon, preferably before the surgery). Patients with young children should also consider getting help from family members or friends as you may not be able to lift your children initially.

Avoid blowing your nose as this can affect the healing of the graft. If you do sneeze, try to do so with the mouth open in order to minimise the pressure through your ears.

You will also not be able to fly for 4-6 weeks after your surgery. **Please consider this prior to your surgery** as it may be advisable to delay your surgery until after planned trips.

Swimming and water exposure to the ear is generally OK after 6 weeks but will be decided during post op visits.

## Hearing

This will generally be quite reduced in the operated ear in the post-operative period. This may last several weeks. Hearing will usually be checked with a formal hearing test about 3 months after surgery. In certain instances repair of hearing bones to maximize hearing will need to be done at a later stage. Your surgeon will explain if this is necessary.

## When to contact your surgeon

If you have free flowing blood from your ear or your wound, either contact your surgeon or present to nearby emergency department. If it is coming from the wound behind the ear, apply pressure to the wound and an ice pack over the wound can help.

If you notice significant redness and swelling behind your ear or pus-like discharge from either the wound or your ear canal, or if you have a fever  $>38$  degrees, contact your surgeon as this may be a sign of infection.

Mild sense of dizziness may be expected in the post-operative course but if you start experiencing significant dizziness or vertigo, contact your surgeon.