

Post-op Instructions Otoplasty

These instructions should be carefully read and followed. They are designed to answer the most commonly asked questions regarding post operative care.

No Smoking for as much time as possible prior to surgery (at least 2 weeks), and at least 2 weeks following surgery. Nicotine causes vasoconstriction (narrowing) of vessels, which decreases the amount of oxygen and nutrients needed to heal.

Day of Surgery:

- You may shower and shampoo the morning of surgery. Do not wear makeup, hair sprays or gels, or nail polish. You may leave acrylic nails on.
- Avoid clothing that must be pulled up over the head.
- Do not wear jewelry of any sort or bring valuables to surgery.

ACTIVITY:

- Limit your activity sharply over the first week following surgery.
- You are encouraged to walk about the house, but avoid bending over at the waist, picking up heavy objects or straining of any kind.
- When you rest or sleep, keep your head elevated 2-3 pillows and avoid turning of your side. If you overexert yourself, bleeding or prolonged swelling may result.
- Keep your emotions under control. It is not unusual to feel a bit depressed for a few days after surgery. This quickly passes as you begin to look and feel better.
- Anger, crying or other emotional outbursts will only add to the swelling or increase the likelihood of bleeding.
- Avoid bending, lifting, pulling, pushing, straining and aerobic activities for 3 weeks.
- You may return to regular exercise 3 weeks after surgery. Moderately strenuous exercise or contact sports should be avoided for at least 6 weeks.
- You are encouraged to walk around the house on the day of surgery and thereafter. This helps to prevent blood clots from developing in the legs.
- Move/pump your legs frequently while lying down. This also helps in preventing blood clots from developing.
- Take deep breaths often when you get home for the first 24 hours after surgery. This helps to expand the base of your lungs.

ORAL INTAKE:

- Alcohol consumption should also be limited as this may raise the blood pressure and initiate bleeding. Do not drink alcohol during the first week.
- Drink plenty of fluids following surgery, as dehydration can contribute to nausea.
- Avoid foods that require much chewing, such as steak. Soft foods may be easier to eat.
- Small amounts of food 20 minutes before taking postoperative medications (especially pain medications and/or antibiotics) can prevent nausea.
- If you vomit or feel nauseated, you should delay food and pain medications until the nausea passes.
- Take only 2-3 ounces of clear liquids at hourly intervals until the nausea subsides. If this symptom persists, call for anti-nausea medications, as subsequent vomiting may be harmful and lead to complications.

BATHING:

- You can gently shampoo your hair on **postoperative day 5**.
- Please refrain from showering for the first 7 days after surgery. You will be allowed to take a shower on the morning of postoperative day 7 prior to your follow-up appointment
- In the meantime you can bathe, but do not submerge your head in the water.

PAIN, SWELLING, BRUISING, INFECTION:

- You will experience some discomfort after your otoplasty procedure. Please take your pain medication as needed. If the prescribed medication does not control the pain, please contact our office.
- Some swelling and bruising of the ears is to be expected. Bruising can be minimized with Arnica, an herb that will be provided by our office.
- Swelling and bruising is maximal at 48 hours after surgery and gradually subsides over the following 10 to 14 days.
- Your final results will occur between 6-12 months. There may be some asymmetry of the ears initially due to swelling on one side more than the other.
- Infection is unusual. Fever, localized swelling with redness and tenderness may signify a developing infection and should be reported. Appropriate treatment will be initiated.

OTHER COMMON INSTRUCTIONS AFTER SURGERY:

- A responsible adult must provide transportation for you after surgery (public transportation is not permissible) and remain with you until the morning following the procedure. If you are having several procedures, you may need or prefer assistance for 1-2 days following your procedure.
- You will need to arrange transportation for your appointment at our office on the day following surgery. Do not drive for 24 hours after surgery or anytime that you are taking pain medications.
- You must stay within 30 minutes of the office on the first night after surgery. These arrangements must be made before surgery.
- Avoid making major decisions or participating in activities requiring judgment for 24 hours after surgery.
- Smoking should be strictly avoided as it interferes with the blood supply to the healing tissues and slows subsequent healing.
- Take all medications as instructed postoperatively.
- Avoid excess sunlight to the ears for at least a year. Even mild sunburn may cause prolonged swelling or irritation of the healing incisions. Use sunscreen with zinc oxide and SPF 20 or greater to help decrease the visibility of the scar.
- Do not compare your progress with that of other patients. Remember that everyone's healing process is unique. Also, if you have any questions or concerns, call on us. Your family and friends may mean well, but you can receive wrong information.

INCISIONAL CARE:

- Keep your dressings dry. We will remove your dressing on the first day after surgery.
- We will provide you with a headband that should be worn continuously for the first 5 days. It should only be removed to perform incision care. After 5 days, you will continue to wear it for an additional 7 days only while you sleep. This helps to hold the ears in good position and protect them.
- Incisions are behind the ear. Use a Q-Tip to apply hydrogen peroxide to the stitches, followed by a Q-tip to apply polysporin antibiotic ointment. Do this twice daily.

CALL THE OFFICE IF YOU DEVELOP ANY OF THE FOLLOWING:

- Temperature of 101°F or greater.
- Pain not relieved with pain medication.
- Swelling, redness, bleeding, and/or foul drainage from incision area.
- Persistent nausea and/or vomiting.
- Any other concerns.

If you have any questions, please call the office @ 973-394-1815.