



POST-OPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS STAPEDECTOMY

POST-OPERATIVE CARE:

After stapedectomy, your only dressing in the ear will be a cotton ball. This may be removed anytime after surgery. There will be some packing (either a small sponge or antibiotic ointment) in your ear canal. This packing will remain in place approximately 7-10 days. Until cleared by your physician, no water should be allowed in the ear. This can easily be accomplished during bathing/showering by placing a cotton ball over the ear canal and sealing it there with Vaseline. Doing this, you may wash your hair in the postoperative period.

Limits on your activity level are extremely important after stapedectomy. You may begin walking immediately after surgery. **You need to allow 3 weeks before any exertion.** This means no running, weightlifting, flying, swimming, or other activities for 3 weeks! A published report also suggests that sexual abstinence should occur for 3 weeks after stapedectomy because the physiologic changes that occur during sex could harm your ear. After 3 weeks, you may begin to gradually resume your routine physical activities and exercise.

WHAT TO EXPECT:

With the packing in the ear, as well as the expected post-surgical changes, you may notice a change in hearing, numbness, tingling or pain of the ear, abnormal taste, ringing in the ear, or a scant amount of drainage from the ear. These can be expected and resolve over time. Typically, the ear is healed by 3-6 weeks after surgery, and this is when the postoperative audiogram (hearing test) is performed. A second audiogram is performed 3 months post-operatively and then annually thereafter.

Postoperative pain is usually not severe. You may take the prescribed pain medication as needed for pain. You may switch to Tylenol as tolerated, but avoid aspirin, Advil and Motrin for at least 10 days after surgery because they can cause bleeding. Additionally, sleeping on 2-3 pillows to elevate the head for 1 week after surgery will decrease the risks of swelling and bleeding. Take your prescribed antibiotic until it is gone in order to decrease the risk of infection. Follow-up visits are scheduled about 7-10 days after surgery to remove any packing. Several weeks later to include an audiogram, and about 3 months after surgery, including an audiogram.

PLEASE DO NOT HESITATE TO CALL THE OFFICE IF ANY QUESTIONS OR PROBLEMS ARISE.

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