

Tympanoplasty, After Care

General Information

After the procedure, it is common to have:

- Mild ear pain;
- A feeling of fullness in your ear;
- Popping or crackling in your ear;
- A small amount of blood or fluid draining from your ear for a few days; or
- Difficulty hearing out of your ear for up to six weeks.

Do not blow your nose or sneeze with your mouth closed for about one to two weeks after surgery. These actions may delay healing or move the piece of tissue (*skin graft*) covering the hole in your eardrum.

Do not use any products that contain nicotine or tobacco, such as cigarettes, e-cigarettes, and chewing tobacco. If you need help quitting, ask your surgeon.

Follow instructions from your healthcare provider about eating or drinking restrictions. You may be instructed to avoid foods that are difficult to chew.

Raise (*elevate*) your head above the level of your heart when you sleep for several days after your procedure. To do this, try putting two or more pillows under your head and upper back.

Keep all follow-up visits as told by your surgeon and nurses. This is important.

Medicines

Take over-the-counter and prescription medicines only as advised by your surgeon or nurses.

If you were prescribed an antibiotic medicine, take it as prescribed by your surgeon. **Do not** stop taking the antibiotic even if you start to feel better.

If you were prescribed antibiotic ear drops, use them as prescribed by your surgeon. **Do not** stop using the drops even if your condition improves.



Incision Care and Ear Care

Follow instructions from your surgeon and nurses about how to take care of your incision. Make sure you:

- Wash your hands with soap and water before and after you change your bandage (*dressing*). If soap and water are not available, use hand sanitizer.
- Change your dressing as told by your surgeon and nurses.

- Leave stitches (*sutures*), skin glue, or adhesive strips in place. These skin closures may need to stay in place for two weeks or longer. If adhesive strip edges start to loosen and curl up, you may gently remove them
- Check your ear, your incision area, and the area where your skin graft was removed (*graft site*) every day for signs of infection. Check for:
 - More redness, swelling, or pain;
 - More fluid or blood;
 - Warmth; and
 - Pus or a bad smell.

Driving

Do not drive for 24 hours, because you were given a sedative during your procedure.

Do not drive or use heavy machinery while taking prescription pain medicine.

Activity

Do not lift anything that is heavier than 20 lbs (9.1 kg) for two weeks after surgery.

Do not fly in an airplane or put your head completely underwater until your healthcare provider approves.

Do not swim or use a hot tub until your healthcare provider approves. Ask your surgeon or nurses if you may take showers. You may take baths or sponge baths but do not soak your head and keep the ear dry. If your surgeon approves showering, protect your ear using one of these methods:

- Using a waterproof earplug; or
- Placing a piece of cotton in your outer ear and covering it with petroleum jelly.

After two weeks, you can slowly return to your normal activities

Call a Doctor if:

- You have a fever;
- You develop any of the following symptoms in your ear, your incision area, or your graft site:
 - More redness, swelling, or pain;
 - More fluid or blood;
 - Warmth; or
 - Pus or a bad smell;
- You vomit or feel nauseous;
- You develop symptoms of a cold, such as sinus pressure or congestion;
- You get water inside your ear; or
- Your sense of taste changes.

Seek Immediate Medical Assistance/Emergency Care if:

- You have severe ear pain;
- You suddenly get dizzy or have problems with balance;
- Your hearing suddenly gets worse; or
- You lose feeling in any part of your face or neck.