

Otoplasty (ear pinning) Information Sheet

PROCEDURE

Otoplasty is a surgical procedure that improves the shape, size, position and proportion of the ear. It can correct a structural defect present at birth, or make aesthetic corrections due to sports or other injury. This surgery can be done under either a monitored or general anesthetic. An incision is made behind the ear and the manipulation of the cartilage and surrounding soft tissue is performed as necessary.

PRE-OPERATIVE

Prior to booking surgery, you will need to decide who your support person will be. It is important that they are aware of the type of surgery you are having, that they are not “squeamish”, and that they are available solely to you during your immediate recovery period (they should not have any other commitments). At the minimum, you cannot be left alone for the first 24 hours after surgery, and you should have someone available to help you for about 3-5 days with regular daily activities, such as making meals, running errands, walking the dog, etc. You will likely need assistance with your first hair wash and managing incision care.

After you have paid a deposit and a surgical date has been confirmed, you will receive more specific information and a review of what you are required to complete before surgery. Once you have booked your date, please ensure you have the following supplies on hand:

- Q-tips
- Stool softener (i.e. Colace or Senokot) as pain medications can cause constipation
- Tylenol Extra Strength
- Ibuprofen 400mg

DAY OF SURGERY

The procedure is done under a general anesthetic so you will be advised to fast after midnight the night prior. You must be discharged from the clinic with a responsible adult (preferably the person who will be helping care for you after surgery). A prescription for pain medication will be provided if needed.

POST-OPERATIVE & LONG-TERM FOLLOW-UP

After the surgery you will be placed in a bulky head dressing which helps to hold your ears in their new position. To help minimize swelling and discomfort, you should sleep with the head of your bed elevated approximately 30 degrees, and avoid keeping your head below your heart for extended periods of time.

Your dressing is left intact until you are seen in office for follow-up by one of our nurses at 5–7 days post-op. Once the dressing is removed, you will be asked to wear a sports band or headband for six weeks. This additional pressure will help to support the ear while it heals.

You must refrain from strenuous physical activity, heavy lifting, and any activities where your head is below your heart for about 4-6 weeks after surgery. Most patients begin reincorporating their regular physical activities around four weeks and slowly work up to their preoperative activity level (typically around six weeks or so).

POST-OPERATIVE & LONG-TERM FOLLOW-UP, CONTINUED

Though complications are rare, they can include infection, bleeding (hematoma), unsatisfactory scarring, and asymmetry. Altered sensations (numbness, tingling, and/or hypersensitivity) are to be expected while you are healing, and can persist for several weeks or months. Our health care team follows you closely to recognize and treat any complications, should they arise.

Some patients may experience cartilage “rebound” after their surgery. This could require surgical revision.

As with any surgery, results cannot be guaranteed. The goal of cosmetic plastic surgery is improvement, and perfection is not attainable. Final results depend on many factors and healing can vary from patient to patient. It is important to remember to have patience during convalescence to allow your body time to recuperate and settle.

Dr. Robinson will assess you approximately 6 weeks post-op and again at approximately 4–6 months post-op to assess your result and take photographs. If revisions are required, they would be discussed, and a surgical plan set up at this time.