

Ear Surgery (for Adults and Children)

After Visit Summary

This is general information. Please see your After Visit Summary for how to take care of yourself after surgery.

Your health care team will work with you to understand any challenges you have after your hospital stay. This will help your team work toward a plan to make sure you have the right care and support to help manage your health after you leave the hospital.

Your Surgery

- Mastoidectomy:** removes cells behind the ear in the skull.
- Stapedectomy:** replaces the stapes in the inner ear with a prosthesis.
- Tympanoplasty:** fixes a tear in the eardrum or a small bone in the middle ear.
- Myringotomy:** places a tube in the inner ear. An incision is made behind the eardrum. A tiny plastic tube is placed through this incision. The tube allows air to equalize pressure behind the eardrum and keep fluid from building up.

Before the Procedure

- Tell your health care provider if you:
 - are pregnant
 - have a latex allergy
 - have diabetes
 - take a blood-thinner medicine.
- Remove any jewelry or piercings.

- Arrange to have someone drive you home. You will not be able to drive after the procedure.

Incision Site

Follow your health care provider's directions. In general:

- If you have cotton packing in your ear, you may change it as needed. Some bloody drainage is normal.
- If you have stitches, they will be removed during your follow-up appointment.
- If you have an ear or head bandage, leave it in place until your follow-up appointment.

Pain Relief

- You may be prescribed pain medicine, an antibiotic, ear drops or both. Take each prescription as directed.

Use of Ear Drops

You may have received a prescription for ear drops. Use them as prescribed. You can expect blood-tinged drainage after using the drops.

- Wash your hands well with soap and water.
- You may warm the bottle of drops by holding it in your hand for a few minutes before using.
- Lie on your side so the ear you're treating is uncovered.

(over)

- **Adults:** Hold the earlobe up and back.
- **Children:** Hold the earlobe down and back.
- Release the drops. Be careful not to touch the dropper to the ear.
- To keep the drops in your ear, continue to lie on your side for 1 to 2 minutes.

Activity

- Stay quiet for the rest of the day.
- Alternate rest with activity.
- Keep water out of your ear.
 - You may take tub baths. Do not take showers or get your hair wet until your follow-up appointment.
 - You may wash your hair with help. If you had a mastoidectomy, keep water away from your ear for 2 weeks.
 - Do not go swimming.
- You can expect to be out work or school for 7 to 10 days. Talk with your health care provider about when you can return.
- For 2 weeks, avoid:
 - heavy lifting (more than 20 pounds), bending or heavy activity
 - contact sports
 - air travel.
- Do not blow your nose. Follow your health care provider's directions.
- Cough or sneeze with your mouth open.
- Do not drive while you are taking a prescription pain medicine or while you feel dizziness.
- Avoid tobacco and secondhand smoke. They can slow your recovery.

Food and Beverages

- Eat well-balanced meals. Follow any instructions your health care provider gave you.
- Drink more fluids.
- Avoid alcohol while you are taking prescription pain medicine.

When To Call Your Health Care Provider

Call your health care provider if you have:

- pain that won't stop
- a temperature higher than 101.5 F
- bleeding that won't stop
- yellow or green discharge from the ear
- increasing redness, swelling, warmth or tenderness at the incision site
- upset stomach and throwing up that won't stop
- severe dizziness
- skin rash or irritated skin
- sudden nose bleed or spitting up blood
- bloody saliva (more than streaks or clots)
- unable to urinate for 10 hours after surgery
- ear packing problems
- any questions or concerns.

Follow-up Appointment

Please keep all follow-up appointments with your health care provider or specialist, even if you are feeling well.