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Certified, The American Board of Plastic Surgery

OTOPLASTY AFTER CARE INSTRUCTIONS

GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS:

- After surgery, please have someone available to stay with you for the first 24 – 48 hrs, as you will be weak and drowsy.
- It is important to get out of bed early and often after your surgery (with assistance) to prevent problems.
- A light diet is best after surgery. Begin by taking liquids slowly and progress to soups or Jell-O. You may start a regular diet after 48 hours.
- Take pain medication with food. You will be given an anti-anxiety/muscle relaxant medication (Valium) that you may take as well to prevent aggravation of the pain cycle. When taking Valium, take it 1 – 2 hours after the pain medication. Take a stool softener with pain medication to prevent constipation (like Ducolax over the counter)
- **DO NOT SMOKE.** This is very important!!!
- Apply covered ice bags or Swiss eye masks (keep them cold or in ice) to the exposed areas of your ears for the first 48 hours to reduce swelling post-operatively. Do not remove head dressing at this time. You will have your head dressing removed by Jackie (PA-C) or Dr. Dubrow the next day after your surgery.
- Wear a headband over the ears for 6-8 weeks after surgery when sleeping or during sports activities.

ACTIVITIES

- It is important to relax and keep your head elevated the night after surgery
- Usually, you will be up and around a few hours after surgery.
- Start walking as soon as possible, as this helps to reduce swelling and lowers the chance of blood clots.
- Do not drive until 24 hours after your surgery AND you are no longer taking any pain medications (narcotics).
- Adults can go back to work approximately 5 days after surgery, depending upon the occupation.
- You may resume full social activities in 5-10 days.
- Avoid any activity in which the ear might be bent for approximately a month.
- You may resume contact sports in 1-2 months.
- No strenuous exercise for at least two weeks.
- No heavy lifting for three weeks.
- No “pull-over” clothing for two weeks.
- Avoid hard chewing foods for two weeks.

INCISION CARE

- You may shower after the dressing has been changed, which is within the 1st and 3rd from surgery
- Avoid exposing scars to sun for at least 12 months.
- Always use a strong sunblock, if sun exposure is unavoidable (SPF 30 or greater).
- Keep incisions clean and inspect daily for signs of infection.
- Wear chinstrap or head band dressings all day for 14 Days. This is important to keeping your new ears in position. After that, wear a clean headband at night for 3-6 weeks.
- You may shampoo your hair after the dressing has been removed the day after surgery.
- Use baby shampoo only and do not blow dry your hair or use styling products for one week.

WHAT TO EXPECT

- Temporary throbbing, aching, swelling, redness and numbness.
- Large pressure dressings/bandages are applied around the ears and head, turban style immediately after surgery.
- Some swelling and bruising may last 10-14 days. Swelling will vary patient-to-patient. Swelling may actually increase the first three to four days before subsiding. Most of your swelling should resolve over the first two to three weeks. Do expect, however, to have minor fluctuations in the remaining swelling over the course of the next two to three months. Things to do to minimize this swelling include keeping your head elevated as much as possible over the first two to three weeks, avoiding bending over or heavy lifting for the first three weeks, and avoiding prolonged sun exposure for the first two to three months.
- Some numbness may exist around the operative areas. Unusual sensations, pins and needles, and occasionally mild discomfort may occur as these nerves regenerate over time
- Tenderness could last up to 3 months.

APPEARANCE

- Usually, there will be a faint scar in the back of the ear that will eventually fade.
- Do not expect both ears to match perfectly, as perfect symmetry is unlikely and unnatural in ears.

FOLLOW-UP CARE

- All sutures will dissolve in 1-2 weeks.
- It is important to be seen by Jackie (PA-C) after your initial post-op checks.
- Jackie (PA-C) will see you in follow-up appointments: 1 week, 3 weeks, 6 weeks, 3 months, 6 months and 1 year
- If you are from out-of-town and cannot see Jackie at the recommended frequency, then it is strongly advised that you establish a relationship with a provider in your hometown who can follow your progress or evaluate you in case of infection, wound separation, or seroma. Jackie and Dr. Dubrow cannot evaluate you or treat you over the phone.
- Call to schedule your appointments at (949) 515-4111 between the hours of 8:30 AM and 5:00 PM to schedule an appointment.

Please call the office at (949) 515-4111 or Jackie (PA-C) at her cell phone at (818) 681-5882 if:

- If you have increased swelling or bruising.
- If swelling and redness persist after a few days.
- If you have increased redness along the incision.
- If you have severe or increased pain not relieved by medication.
- If you have any side effects to medications; such as, rash, nausea, headache, vomiting.
- If you have an oral temperature over 100.4 degrees.
- If you have any yellowish or greenish drainage from the incisions or notice a foul odor.
- If you have bleeding from the incisions that is difficult to control with light pressure.
- If a blood clot forms on the ear.
- Please call between the hours of 8:30 AM - 5:00 PM. If you need immediate care, please call Jackie anytime on her personal cell phone. There is no such thing as a minor question. I would rather you call me than wonder and not do the right thing, so please call my office, text me, or email me anytime.
- **IF AT ANY POINT YOU EXPERIENCE SHORTNESS OF BREATH, PLEASE VISIT YOUR LOCAL EMERGENCY ROOM PROMPTLY AS THIS COULD INDICATE A PULMONARY EMBOLISM (BLOOD CLOT IN LUNG)**
- Any questions in regards to scheduling or confirming appointments should be communicated with the office staff (not Jackie) at 949-515-4111. If it is the weekend, please contact your surgical coordinator (Maryam or Kim) with those questions.

You may call, text, or email Jackie (PA-C), with any questions or concerns at 818-681-5882 or at jacqueline@drdubrow.com. Please include your name, surgery, date of surgery, and question in text message or voicemail.