

POSSIBLE COMPLICATIONS OF OTOPLASTY

BLEEDING – Bleeding or development of a hematoma (blood collection) requiring treatment occurs 1%, or less, of the time.

INFECTION – Occurs in 1% to 2% of patients requiring a change in antibiotics or sometimes a minor surgical procedure.

ASSYMMETRY OR IRREGULARITY – Every attempt is made to make the ears symmetrical. Occasionally slight asymmetries or irregularities occur, often due to pre-existing differences of the ears. If this asymmetry is noticeable, and I feel improvement can be achieved, surgical revision will be considered.

POOR SCARRING – This occurs occasionally. The incision although hidden behind the ear can occasionally develop a “hypertrophic” or enlarged scar. Medical therapy and sometimes a surgical revision are needed.

EXTRUSION OF SUTURES – The new shape of the ear is held with permanent suture. Very uncommonly a suture will work its way through the skin and become exposed. If this occurs it is removed. The ear usually maintains its shape. If it does not, a revision procedure may be needed.

LIMITED RESULTS – Occasionally ear reshaping cannot achieve the desired result. If I feel further improvement can be achieved I will suggest revision surgery.

NEED FOR REVISION SURGERY – If a revision surgery is felt needed by both the patient and surgeon, fees will be charged based on the extent of the revision procedure.

WHAT TO EXPECT FOLLOWING OTOPLASTY

SWELLING – After the dressing is removed swelling of the ears will peak at 2 to 3 days post-surgery. It begins to resolve thereafter, with the majority dissipated by 2 weeks.

DISCOMFORT – Mild to moderate discomfort for several days, followed by mild discomfort for a variable period thereafter is typical. Use your pain medication as needed. Recovery is more rapid once you are off the prescription pain medication. If pain becomes severe along with drainage or increased swelling please call me as soon as possible, as this may suggest an infection.

BRUISING – This resolves after 7 to 10 days, and varies from patient to patient.

INCISION – Lumpiness of the incision is not uncommon following surgery. It usually resolves spontaneously with time, weeks to months. If scar tissue increases it may be a “hypertrophic” scar, in which case we will treat medically and sometimes surgically.

FINAL RESULT – Once the dressing is removed the day after surgery you will see an immediate result. However, the final result will take some time to achieve, but the results get better with time.

OTOPLASTY POSTOPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS

- **Apply cold compresses intermittently for 12-24 hours following surgery.**
Cold compresses are made with small (snack or sandwich size) plastic bags filled with crushed ice or frozen peas/corn. Cold compresses are most important the first 12 hours, but may be continued up to 24 hours. Use cold compresses by placing them over the ears for 20 (twenty) minutes and then off for 20 (twenty) minutes. The compresses may be discontinued while the patient sleeps.
- Take medications as prescribed.
- For the **first week** sleep with your head elevated 30 degrees or more (two or three pillows).
- Avoid bending over or lifting heavy objects for 7-10 days.
- Restrict salt in your diet for 7 (seven) days.
- Questions regarding medications contact our office or speak with the doctor at your post-operative appointments.
- You may shower and gently wash your face and hair the day after surgery. Please keep the bandages as dry as possible. You may find it helpful to use a shower guard that allows hair to be washed without getting water on the face or ears.
- Please call our office if you are experiencing significant discomfort or notice drainage or increased swelling.
- Be certain to return for all your follow-up appointments.
- Be patient during your healing process. It takes time to heal and recover.

If you have any questions, please contact my office.

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