



Postoperative Care Instructions for Cochlear Implant Surgery

- After surgery, you will have a special plastic and gauze dressing wrapped around the operated ear and your head (called a Glasscock Dressing). This protects the ear and provides gentle but consistent pressure to prevent bruising. You may remove the plastic dressing, gauze, and all other dressings the morning following surgery unless instructed otherwise by your surgeon.
- Following removal of the dressing and gauze, you may begin using medicated ear drops as instructed by your surgeon.
- There is an incision behind your ear. This will typically be closed with either absorbable sutures (stitches) or a specialized skin glue. Both of these dissolve on their own and do not need to be removed. You may remove crusts, if they should form, from that area daily with either a clean, damp cloth or a cotton ball with some peroxide. Avoid excessive rubbing or scrubbing of the incision. If glue was used, avoid picking at it as this may interrupt the wound healing process. It is ok to get this area wet 72 hours (3 days) after your surgery date.
- Your ear canal was not involved in the surgery and care of this is not required unless otherwise directed by your surgeon.
- Avoid nose blowing until cleared by your surgeon. Sneeze through an open mouth if possible. The pressure associated with nose blowing may disrupt your healing process.
- Avoid lifting >30lbs, bending over, twisting, or strenuous activities for at least 2 weeks after surgery or until cleared by your surgeon.
- It is ok to sleep on the side of your surgery but this may be sore and uncomfortable.
- It is ok to drive following surgery when you feel ready and when you are no longer taking narcotic pain medications.
- After surgery and removal of the dressing, you may be able to feel your implant under the skin.
- Flying after surgery may be permitted but should be discussed with your surgeon.
- The implant will typically be activated during a scheduled appointment with your surgeon-audiology team around 2-4 weeks following your surgery. The implant will NOT provide hearing sensations prior to this. Any sensations encountered are simply part of the healing process.
- If you were implanted as part of a hearing preservation protocol, you may notice your natural hearing is somewhat muffled as compared to what it was prior to surgery. This is normal and should recover over the next 3-4 weeks after your surgery.

If you experience these symptoms after surgery, you should call your doctor's office:

- Excessive bloody drainage from the incision or swelling behind / above your ear.
- Any sign of infection such as increasing pain, yellow drainage, or swelling.
- Fevers in excess of 102 degrees.

Never hesitate to call the surgeon's office if you have questions about your postoperative progress.

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