



Postoperative Care Instructions for Tympano-Mastoidectomy

- 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 will be packed with a specialized foam material (Gelfoam) that will dissolve on its own over time. Your surgeon may also remove some of this material at the time of your first follow up appointment in clinic. Please do not try to pick at or remove the packing from your ear canal as this could severely disrupt your healing process.
- The ear canal must be kept dry during your recovery to achieve proper healing. This includes exposure to pool or shower water. Although the incision behind your ear can be exposed to showering, the ear canal must remain dry for 3-4 weeks following your surgery or for the allotted time as instructed by your surgeon.
- To keep your ear canal dry in the shower, we recommend covering a standard, clean cotton ball with Vaseline ointment or petroleum jelly and putting this in the bowl portion of your outer ear leading to the ear canal. While showering, avoid any direct water to the ear. The cotton ball can be removed afterward. Remove any excess Vaseline or petroleum product with a dry washcloth.