

Ear Surgery

Valley Regional Hospital

It is important to keep water out of your operated ear until the graft takes and your surgeon tells you that it is healed. This is usually 1 to 4 months after surgery. Getting water in your ear can cause:

- › Infection
- › Holes to reopen
- › Graft failure (the graft does not take)

This pamphlet is for educational purposes only. It is not intended to replace the advice or professional judgment of a health care provider. The information may not apply to all situations. If you have any questions, please ask your health care provider.

Find all patient education resources here:
www.nshealth.ca/patient-education-resources

Connect with a registered nurse in Nova Scotia any time:
Call 811 or visit: <https://811.novascotia.ca>

Prepared by: Otolaryngology, Valley Regional Hospital
Illustration by: LifeART Super Anatomy 1 Images,
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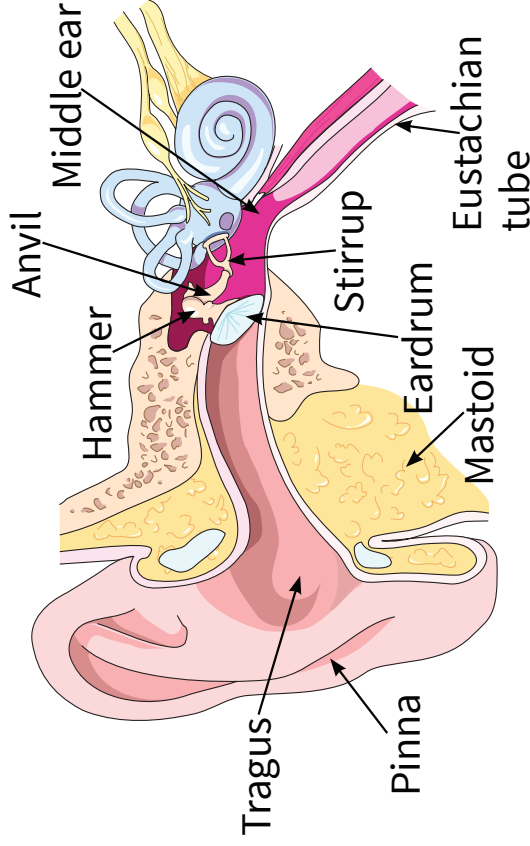
My surgery is on:

Date: _____

Time: _____

Ear Surgery

This pamphlet explains what to expect before and after ear surgery, and how to care for yourself at home. If you have questions or need help during your hospital stay, please ask your health care team. We are here to help you.



My surgery is called:

- ☐ **Tympanomastoidectomy:** This surgery removes diseased tissue from the mastoid and middle ear.
- ☐ **Tympanoplasty:** This surgery fixes a hole in the eardrum to make your hearing better.

Follow-up

- **Do not** take out the packing in your ear. Your surgeon will take it out for you or it will get washed out with your ear drops.
- Your surgeon will take out your stitches or staples in 1 to 2 weeks or they may dissolve (go away on their own).
- You will have packing in your ear that will dissolve. After your first follow-up visit:
 - › Use Ciprodex® ear drops 2 times a day for 14 days.
 - › Then use oil 2 times a day until your 2nd follow-up visit (see the Pre-visit Ear Oil Instructions you were given).
- You may have a clear, silicone disc protecting your eardrum. The disc is about the size of a dime. Your surgeon will remove it 4 to 8 weeks after your surgery.
 - › The disc may come off on its own when you put in ear oil or ear drops. You may see a dime-sized piece of plastic come out. **You do not need to put it back in.**
- You may go back to work when your surgeon says it is OK. Most people can go back to work after 7 days.
- You will need a hearing test about 3 to 4 months after your surgery. This is usually done at your 3rd or 4th follow-up visit.

Call your surgeon or go to the nearest Emergency Department right away if you have:

- › More pain or pain that cannot be controlled by pain medication
- › Drainage (fluid) from your ear that is green or has a bad smell
- › More clear drainage that is not getting better, especially with a headache that is getting worse. This could be leaking fluid from the inner ear or around the brain.
- › Fever (temperature above 38 °C or 100.4 °F)
- › Dizziness, a spinning feeling, or losing your balance for more than 7 days
- › Paralysis on 1 side of your face that does not get better a few hours after surgery

Getting ready for surgery

- You may need tests before your surgery. This will depend on your general health and the type of surgery you are having. Staff will contact you to arrange for testing before surgery, if needed.
- **Plan to have a responsible adult drive you home and stay with you the first 48 hours (2 days) after your surgery.** This is for your safety.
- If you take medication, please talk with your surgeon before your surgery. They will tell you which medications to take before your surgery with a sip of water, and which ones to stop taking.
- Stock up on fluids like water, juice, Gatorade® or Powerade®, milkshakes, and soups.
- Have acetaminophen (Tylenol®) on hand.

Medications

- If you take blood thinning medication (like warfarin or plavix), you will need to stop taking it before your surgery.



- Talk with your surgeon for more information.
- Talk with your health care provider who prescribed you your medication to make sure it is safe to stop.

For 14 days (2 weeks) before your surgery:

- **Do not** take any natural or herbal medications or products. These may cause more bleeding.

For 10 days before your surgery:

- **Do not** take ASA (acetylsalicylic acid, Aspirin®).

For 7 days (1 week) before your surgery:

- **Do not** take ibuprofen (Advil®, Motrin®).
- It is OK to take acetaminophen (Tylenol®).

What can I expect after surgery?

- After surgery, it is normal for your hearing to be worse for a short time.
- Your operated ear may stick out from your head more.
- You may have some bruising around your eyes or your operated ear.
- You may have some swelling on the operated side of your face.
- Your sense of taste may change on your tongue (on the operated side). This usually goes away in a few weeks to months.
- Your ear and face may feel numb on the operated side.
 - › **This is not paralysis.** Paralysis is not being able to move 1 side of your face.

For 7 days after your surgery:

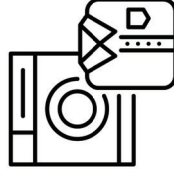
- › Wash your stitches with peroxide, then put Polysporin® on them in the morning and at night.
- › After 7 days of putting Polysporin® on your stitches, switch to using Vaseline®.
- If you have a lot of drainage (fluid), keep a cotton ball in your ear.
- If you do not have any drainage, you do not need to use a cotton ball (except in the shower). Replace the cotton ball if it gets wet.

Do not:

- › Fly until your surgeon says it is OK (usually 4 weeks)
- › Jog, run, or play contact sports for 7 days
- › Smoke until your surgeon says it is OK
- › Strain while pooping. To help yourself poop, eat prunes or bran and drink 6 to 8 large glasses of water a day.

The night before your surgery

- Do not eat or drink anything after midnight.
- It is important to “sleep clean” before your surgery to lower your chance of infection. Please follow these “sleep clean” steps:
 - › Change your bed sheets.
- Take a bath or shower:
 - › Wash all parts of your body using soap and water.
 - › Shampoo your hair.



- Do not use any scented products (like creams, powders, or scents). Nova Scotia Health is scent-free.

- Wear clean pyjamas.

- Do not let your pets sleep with you.
- After your shower, we recommend using special cleaning wipes to help lower your chance of infection. You can pick them up at:



- › Valley Regional Hospital Day Surgery

Hours: Monday to Friday, 7 a.m. to 8 p.m.

Weekends and holidays, 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Phone: 902 679-2657, extension 2840

- Do not smoke or vape.

- Follow any instructions given by your surgeon, anesthesiologist (doctor who puts you to sleep for your surgery), or nurse.

The morning of your surgery

- You may take your medications as told by your surgeon with sips of water.
- You may brush your teeth.
- Follow any directions you were given at the Pre-Admissions Clinic (if you had an appointment there).
- Take off all make-up and jewelry before coming to the hospital.
- If you have long hair, pull it back with an elastic.
- We recommend that your face is clean shaven.
- Nova Scotia Health is smoke-free and scent-free. Please respect this policy. **Do not** use scented products (like perfume, aftershave, or scented hair spray).
- Give yourself lots of time to find parking.

After you leave the hospital

Medication

- Your surgeon may give you a prescription for antibiotics before you leave the hospital.
- They may also give you pain medication (like morphine, Tylenol® 3) to take home with you.
 - › **Do not drink alcohol while taking pain medication.**
- **Do not drive while taking pain medication.**
- They may also give you drops to start **after** your first follow-up visit 7 days after surgery.

Instructions:

- Keep your incisions (cuts) dry for 48 hours.
- You can shower and wash your hair 48 hours after your surgery.
- **Before** you get in the shower, put Vaseline® on a cotton ball and put the cotton ball in your ear. This will keep water from going into your ear.
- **After 48 hours, it is OK if your stitches get wet, but you must keep water out of your ear until your surgeon says it is OK (usually 2 to 3 months).**

- You may have trouble moving your face on the operated side because the nerve in your face was frozen during surgery. This will go away over time.
- You will have some pain and discomfort after your surgery. Ask your nurse for medication, if needed.
- **Keep your mouth open when you cough or sneeze.** This can help to prevent too much pressure in your middle ear and eustachian tube.
- **Tell your nurse if you feel dizzy, have a spinning feeling, or lose your balance.** This is common.
 - › This usually lasts for a few hours or a few days, but it may last for a few weeks or longer.
 - › A spinning feeling is more common if you had surgery around your hearing bones or your inner ear.

• **You cannot go home alone. A responsible adult must take you home and stay with you for the first 24 hours after your surgery.**

• **Tell your surgeon if you are sick or have:**

- › Diarrhea (loose, watery poop)
- › Vomiting (throwing up)
- › Nausea (upset stomach)
- › Fever (temperature above 38 °C or 100.4 °F)
- › A cough
- › A cold

• **Bring with you on the day of your surgery:**

- ☐ Provincial health (MSI) card
- ☐ Private medical insurance card (if you have one)
- ☐ All of your medications (including prescription and over-the-counter products, inhalers, creams, eye drops, patches, herbal products, vitamins, and supplements) in their original containers
- ☐ CPAP machine (if you use one)
- ☐ A container or bag for the ride home in case you vomit

My appointment

- Your surgery may be cancelled if you are late.
- If you cannot keep your appointment, call the booking office as soon as possible:
 - › Phone: 902-679-2657, extension 2401
- Arrive 2 hours before your scheduled surgery time or at the time your surgeon's office told you.
 - › If your surgery is scheduled for 8 a.m., please arrive by 6:15 a.m.

Go through the main entrance and register at Central Registration.

- Delays in the O.R. may cause a change in your surgery time. Your surgery may be cancelled if there is an emergency. If this happens, your surgeon's office will call you to arrange a new date.

After surgery

- You will have packing and Polysporin® in your ear and behind your eardrum. This will make your hearing feel worse. The packing will dissolve (go away) in about 3 months.
- You may have stitches behind or in front of your ear.
- You will have a bandage over your ear. **Keep the bandage on for 24 hours (1 day) after your surgery.**
- To check that a nerve in your face is working normally, your nurse will ask you to:
 - › Smile
 - › Pucker your lips
 - › Close your eyes
 - › Lift your eyebrows
 - › Wrinkle your forehead
- **Use your call bell and wait for a nurse before you get up for the first time, even if you feel OK. Do not try to get up by yourself.** You may be drowsy or dizzy.
- Your intravenous (I.V.) will be taken out when you are drinking well and do not have nausea.
- If you have nausea, ask your nurse for medication.