



Patient & Family Guide  
2019

# After Ear Surgery

Valley Regional Hospital

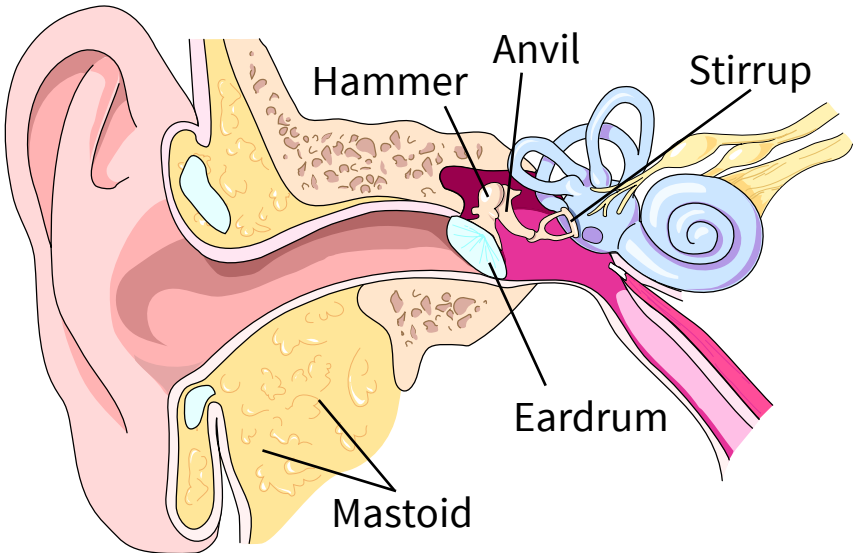


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# After Ear Surgery: Valley Regional Hospital

This pamphlet explains what to expect after ear surgery and how to care for yourself at home.

During your hospital stay, staff members are always available to help you.



## Types of surgery

- Mastoidectomy:** cleans out the mastoid bone that has been damaged by an infection
- Ossiculoplasty (such as a stapedectomy):** tries to give you back your hearing by repairing the bones in your ear
- Tympanoplasty:** fixes a hole in the eardrum to improve your hearing

- **Tympanomastoidectomy:** cleans out the mastoid and middle ear, taking out diseased tissue or benign (non-cancerous) skin cysts that can break down parts of the ear

## **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) over time.
- 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).
- The nurse will ask you to smile, pucker your lips, close your eyes, lift your eyebrows, and wrinkle your forehead. This is to check that a nerve in your face is working normally.
- Call the nurse before you get up for the first time. The nurse will help you, as you may still feel drowsy and dizzy.
- Your intravenous (IV) will be taken out when you are drinking well and not feeling sick to your stomach.
- If you are feeling sick to your stomach, ask the nurse for medication.

- You may have trouble moving your face on the operated side due to freezing of the nerve. This will go away over time .
- You can expect to have some discomfort after your surgery. We can give you pain medication every 4 hours. Ask your nurse for medication, if needed.
- Keep your mouth open when you cough or sneeze. Try to cough or sneeze into your elbow.
- If you have a strong “spinning” feeling, tell your nurse.
  - › This is not uncommon and usually lasts for a few hours or days, but may sometimes last for a few weeks or longer.
  - › This is more common if you had surgery around your hearing bones or inner ear.
- A family member or friend should take you home. You should not go home alone.

## At home

### Medication

- Your doctor will give you a prescription for pain pills.
- **Do not drink alcohol while taking pain pills.**



## Instructions:

- You may shower and wash your hair after 48 hours (2 days). **Before you get in the shower**, put Vaseline® on a cotton ball and place it in your ear hole to keep water from going into your ear. It is **OK** if your stitches get wet 48 hours after surgery, but you should keep using Vaseline® on a cotton ball to cover your ear hole. Replace the cotton ball if it gets wet.
- Put Polysporin® on your stitches in the morning and at night.
- Keep a cotton ball in your ear to catch drainage. Change this outer cotton ball when it gets wet. If you do not have any drainage, you do not need to use a cotton ball (except in the shower) and can leave your ear open to the air.

## Followup

- Do not take out the deep packing in your ear. Your doctor will take it out for you.
- Your doctor will take out your stitches or staples in 1-2 weeks.
- Once your stitches are taken out, use Ciprodex® antibiotic drops, 4 drops twice a day for 2 weeks, to wash out any packing.
- You may go back to work when your doctor says it is OK.

## Do not:

- › Drive or fly until your doctor says it is OK.
- › Jog, run, or play contact sports until your doctor says it is OK.
- › Strain while having a bowel movement (poop). Eat prunes and/or bran to avoid constipation (not being able to poop). Drink 6-8 large glasses of fluid each day.
- › Place any objects in your ear.
- › Smoke until your doctor says it is OK.



## Important: Call your doctor if you have any of the following symptoms:

- › discomfort
- › a “spinning” feeling (feel very off balance)
- › paralysis (can’t move) on one side of your face which does not get better a few hours after surgery

**Stay away from people with symptoms of a cold while you are healing.**

## It is normal:

- › For your operated ear to stick out a bit.
- › To have slight bruising around your eyes or ear.

- › To have slight swelling of your face on the operated side
- › To have a change in taste on the same side of your tongue as your surgery. This usually goes away within a few weeks to months.
- › To have slight numbness of your ear and face on the operated side. This is not paralysis.

## **Call your doctor or go to the nearest Emergency Department if you have:**

- › unusual pain
- › discharge (drainage) from your ear that is green or smells bad
- › a fever

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For more information, go to <http://library.novascotia.ca>

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

Learn about other programs and services in your community: call 211 or visit <http://ns.211.ca>

*Nova Scotia Health Authority promotes a smoke-free, vape-free, and scent-free environment.*

*Please do not use perfumed products. Thank you!*

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The information in this pamphlet is to be updated every 3 years or as needed.