



TUAN A. TRAN M.D., M.B.A, F.A.C.S.

Diplomate American Board of Plastic Surgery, Diplomate American Board of Surgery

General Surgery, Reconstructive Surgery, Aesthetic Surgery, Plastic and Hand Surgery

Ear Surgery

Post-Operative Instructions

Immediately Following Surgery

1. An adult should stay with you for at least the first 24 hours after surgery. Rest is absolutely necessary.
2. You will be wrapped in dressings that will not be removed until your follow up appointment.
3. You should rest with your head elevated in a recliner or with at least 2 pillows for at least the 2 weeks after surgery. Try not to sleep on the side of your face but rather sleep with the back of your head on the pillow for about two weeks. Some patients prefer an airline type pillow for comfort. Also popular is the common pillow called a "husband." This is the large pillow that has extensions that go under the arms and supports the patient.
4. Take the prescribed pain medications before you begin to feel discomfort. It is easier to prevent pain than control it.
5. Restrict your activities the day of surgery and several days afterwards. It is not unusual to require 7 to 10 days before you are feeling back to normal, and before you can resume physical activity.
6. Place ice packs over the surgical sites.

Daily Care

Your dressing after surgery will remain on until seen by your surgeon. It is important to relax and keep your head elevated the night after surgery. Your dressing will be removed in clinic after surgery. At that point we'll review your care:

1. Go over suture lines behind the ears 3 times daily with hydrogen peroxide on a Q-tip. After this, again with a Q-tip, apply a liberal amount of Neosporin or Bacitracin ointment. The stitches behind the ears are dissolvable and keeping them lubricated helps quicken the process.
2. Your headband will be placed over the ears following the surgery. Please try to wear it at all times for the first 2 weeks following surgery. This is important to keep your new ears in the correct position. You may shower the second day following surgery. Baths are a better choice for most people. Be sure to use a gentle shampoo such as Johnson's baby shampoo
3. Be sure to report immediately any signs of bleeding that persist for more than 10 min., infections, redness, fever, unusual drainage, or excessive pain.
4. If non-absorbable sutures are used, it will be removed on the seventh day after surgery.



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5. Following 2 weeks, please wear your headband at night until the six-week point.

What to expect

Swelling

Swelling will vary from patient to patient. Swelling may actually increase the first 3-4 days before subsiding. Most swelling should resolve over the first 2-3 weeks. Do expect, however, to have minor fluctuations in the remaining swelling over the course of the next 2-3 months. Things to do to minimize the swelling include: Applying cold packs to both ears for the first 3-4 days, keeping your head elevated as much as possible over the first 2-3 weeks, avoiding bending over or heavy lifting greater than 10 lbs for the first 6 weeks, and avoiding prolonged sun exposure for the first 2-3 months.

Discoloration

Bruising will vary like swelling from person to person. Most bruising and discoloration should resolve over the first 2 weeks. Makeup, with Dr. Tran's permission can be applied 10 days to 2 weeks after surgery.

Numbness

Your ears may be numb following surgery. This is normal and will subside over the coming weeks to months. Unusual sensations, pins and needles, and occasionally mild discomfort may occur as these nerves regenerate over time.

Depression

It is not uncommon for patients to go through a period of mild depression after cosmetic surgery. This typically occurs the second week after surgery while some of the swelling and bruising still persist and yet the patient is anxious to see a final result. Realize this is a temporary condition and things will improve. Focus on diligently following the wound care as well as other activities to help divert your mind.

Restrictions

- No strenuous exercise for at least 2 weeks.
- No heavy lifting for 3 weeks.
- No "pull-over" clothing for 2 weeks.
- Avoid chewing hard foods for 2 weeks.
- No contact sports for 6 weeks.

Recovery

- The healing time for ear surgery is often less than expected and the results are worth the wait. While swelling should be completely gone after 4-6 weeks, your healing will continue for the entire first year. I will follow you through this entire process, but be patient.
- Slight elevation of temperature immediately following surgery is not uncommon. If the temperature persists, notify the office. Tylenol should be taken to reduce the fever.
- Your case is individual as no two people are alike. Do not accept well intended advice from friends. Discuss your questions and concerns with either Dr. Tran or a member of his staff.



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Follow-up

At your pre-operative appointment, our office staff will schedule a follow-up appointment for you within 5-7 days following your procedure. At this appointment, Dr. Tran will check up on your wound and provide you with further care instructions.

Possible Problems/Emergency

If you develop any symptoms such as fevers with temperature greater than 101.5 F, chills, persistent nausea and vomiting, inability to urinate, severe pain not controlled with medications, pus drainage from the wound site, or for any acute problems or illnesses, please contact our office at 714-839-8000 between the hours of 9AM-6PM on Monday-Thursday and 9AM-1PM on Friday; or you may reach us at 714-860-3588 after hours.

If you are unable to reach your surgeon or a member of his staff, go to the Emergency Room closest to you.

References:

North West Valley. (2020). *Post-operative instructions: Ear surgery*. Retrieved from <https://www.nwvalleyoralandfacialsurgery.com/cosmetic-surgery/surgery-instructions/ear-otoplasty/>