

## **Post-Operative Instructions: Middle Ear Surgery/Stapedectomy**

- On the day after surgery, remove the covering. The ear will have a plastic cup dressing with Velcro straps containing gauze placed over the ear to absorb drainage. This dressing can be adjusted as needed for comfort. A cotton ball will be in the ear canal, it may be removed at this point. Begin the drops (if you were prescribed these) three times daily unless directed otherwise by your surgeon. Please sleep on your back or un-operated ear for the first 7 days.
- DO NOT blow your nose for 4 weeks following surgery. If you need to sneeze, do it with your mouth open.
- Keep water out of your ear for at least 5 days after surgery, at which point the incision can get wet unless otherwise instructed by your surgeon. Prior to 5 days, you may use a cotton ball in the ear and cover it with Vaseline to seal the canal before washing your hair.
- Post-operative pain varies greatly from patient to patient. It is usually most severe in the first couple of hours immediately following surgery and then improves. Constipation is a common side effect of prescription pain medications. Over-the-counter stool softeners or short-term laxative use may be required. No driving, operating heavy machinery, or other unsafe activities while using prescription pain medication.
- Some drainage from the ear is to be expected. You may use a fresh cotton ball to help collect this drainage. If the drainage develops a foul odor or increases in amount, please contact our office.
- Clear fluids are recommended initially after anesthesia or if nauseated. If no nausea occurs, you may return to a regular diet. Be sure to maintain adequate hydration. If nausea persists, contact our office for an anti-nausea medication.
- Non-strenuous activities may be resumed as tolerated. Avoid strenuous exercise, sports, work-outs, heavy lifting, and bending for 3 weeks after surgery.
- Avoid air travel for 3 weeks after surgery.
- Some dizziness and ringing in the ear are common after surgery. No driving, operating heavy machinery, or other unsafe activities while dizzy. Please contact our clinic if dizziness is severe or persists for longer than a few days. Imbalance may take a couple of weeks to completely resolve.
- Contact our clinic if the ear becomes painful, red, swollen, if you develop a fever above 101.5, or if a foul odor develops. It is common for the ear to stand out from the head due to swelling. This usually resolves within a few weeks after surgery.
- For after hours emergencies, please call **801-596-6665**.