

**Post Operative Instructions –
Stapedectomy / Ossicular Reconstruction / Middle Ear Exploration**

**Jason A. Beyea, M.D. Ph.D. FRCSC
Otology/Neurotology, Otolaryngology
Hotel Dieu Hospital
144 Brock Street, Murray Building
Kingston, Ontario
K7L 5G2
Phone: 613-544-3400 x3620
Fax: 613-547-5654**

This instruction sheet is designed to help you care for your ear following surgery, and to answer many of the commonly asked questions. *Please read the entire sheet carefully.* Don't hesitate to call our office 613-544-3400 x3620 if you have a question or concern. If Mary cannot answer your questions, the doctor will return your call or you will be asked to come to the office.

Leaving the Hospital

- Have family/friends drive home slowly to minimize dizziness.
- You may receive a prescription for pain medicine. You will not routinely receive a prescription for antibiotics.
- The cotton ball should be left in place for 8-12 hours unless saturated with blood. Thereafter, it should be changed a few times daily or as often as needed.

Home Care-The First Few Days

- For the First 24 hours:
 - Lie quietly with the head elevated.
 - Do not bend over for 1 week after surgery. If you must bend, bend from the knees, not head first from the hips. This will prevent pressure build-up in the head.
- Until seen for your post-operative visit, do not participate in vigorous physical activity, including sport, even though you feel well.
- Do not lift over 10 pounds.
- After 3 weeks you may resume all activities, including sports and physical exercise.
- It is normal for the ear to drain for a few days. The drainage can be blood-tinged or brown. The cotton ball can be changed several times daily as needed to absorb drainage. If the drainage become yellow, green, or has a foul smelling odor, call Dr. Beyea's office.
- The ear canal will be filled with ointment or dissolvable packing, which should be left in place. **Do not clean the ear canal with cotton swabs.**
- The auricle (outer ear) can be wiped gently with a soft cloth or cotton swab to remove dried blood, but if the ear is tender this is not necessary.
- You may wash your hair 2 days after surgery. **Keep all water out of the ear canal** by using a cotton ball heavily coated with antibiotic ointment placed in the outermost part of the ear canal.
- If there is an incision behind the ear, the sutures are absorbable. Apply antibiotic ointment to this incision twice a day.

- Do not blow your nose for 3 weeks after surgery. Sniffing is okay. This is important should you develop a cold. After 3 weeks, you may blow your nose gently, one side at a time.
- Sneeze or cough with your mouth open for 3 weeks after surgery.
- You may fly 3 days following surgery. Whenever you fly, take an over the counter decongestant 30 minutes before take-off. Before the plane begins to descend, spray your nose with the decongestant nasal spray. Use this procedure whenever you fly in the future. You may use the same treatment when traveling by car in mountainous regions.
- You may hear a variety of noises in your ear such as cracking and popping. This is part of the normal healing process.
- You may not be able to hear well from the operated ear.
- It is not uncommon to feel slightly dizzy or lightheaded.

Home Care-After the First Few Days

- Any drainage from the ear should begin to decrease and pain should also subside. You may need to continue taking Ibuprofen or Tylenol for mild pain relief.
- There may be change in taste (usually described as metallic) on one side of the tongue and this usually improves within several months.
- All stitches are under the skin and will not need to be removed.
- **Continue to keep all water out of the ear canal.**

First Follow-up Appointment

- You will be given a follow-up appointment with Dr. Beyea prior to leaving the hospital.

Call office if:

- Increased pain not relieved by prescription medications.
- Large amounts of bleeding from the ear area.
- Pus/Foul smelling drainage from the ear.
- Redness in the ear area.
- Temperature over 38°C on 2 consecutive readings.
- Severe dizziness.