

Otoplasty Post Operative Instructions

Nurse Line (8:30am to 5pm) **937-496-0261**
Emergency After Hours Line **937-496-2600**

Effects of Anesthesia

Otoplasty (pinning of the ears) involves general anesthesia, typically for about 2 hours. Patients may be quite irritable for several hours after surgery. If sedatives were given, some patients will remain sleepy for much of the day. Nausea and vomiting are occasionally seen, and usually resolve by the evening of surgery - even without additional medications.

After Surgery

- Your child will have a soft head wrap on after surgery. You will keep this on until your surgeon sees you in the office 1 to 3 days after surgery to remove it. When you see your child's ears for the first time after surgery, they will be very swollen, a purple/pink color and be very close to the side of the head. This is normal.
- After the head wrap is removed, your child needs to wear a "sweat band" over his/her ears 24 hours a day for the first 2 weeks after surgery. For the 3rd and 4th week after surgery, the headband only needs to be worn at night while sleeping. You should buy 3 or 4 of these so you can wash them and switch them out.
- Baths and showers are fine starting AFTER your surgeon removes the head wrap. Do not allow your child to soak the ears with water (i.e. no lying down in the tub) or swim for 3 weeks after surgery. Children should be kept out of school or day care for at least 1 week after surgery.
- For the first 2-3 weeks after surgery, be very careful about wrestling or rough play that may result in the ear getting pulled forward. This can cause the sutures that were placed in surgery to be disrupted.

Medications

- Your child will be prescribed Tylenol Elixir and Lortab Elixir. You may use ONE OR THE OTHER every 4 hours (DO NOT give them at the same time). Start by giving regular Tylenol scheduled every 4 hours while your child is awake for the first several days after surgery. If that does not help to relieve the pain then substitute the Lortab Elixir for the next dose. Every time you give a dose of Lortab Elixir, do so with some food or full liquid to prevent nausea.

- **IT IS OK TO TAKE OVER THE COUNTER PAIN MEDICATION (IBUPROFEN, NAPROXEN, or ACETAMINOPHEN) IN ADDITION TO YOUR PRESCRIBED MEDICATIONS. DO NOT TAKE ASPIRIN UNLESS CLEARED WITH YOUR SURGEON.**
- Limit Acetaminophen/Tylenol to less than 4,000mg/day
- Limit Ibuprofen/Motrin to less than 3,600mg/day
- Your child may be given an antibiotic after surgery to prevent infection. Take this medication with food to prevent nausea or vomiting.
- You will be given Bacitracin ointment. Apply this to the incision behind the ear 1-2 times a day (when you remove the head band to change it or bathe). You will have to use a Q-tip to reach the incision.

Other things...

- Pain is usually fairly minimal after surgery; many children never need Lortab Elixir.
- The ears are “over corrected” in surgery. This is because they will relax and protrude more as they heal. This relaxation usually starts when the headband is no longer worn 24 hours a day. This final result is usually evident by about 2-3 months after surgery.
- Button down shirts and PJs are best after surgery so you don’t have to pull them over your child’s head and ears.
- Your child will look different to you at first! Changing the ear shape changes how the entire face looks.
- Your child will be very sensitive to having the ears manipulated for up to a month or two after surgery. The pain from surgery usually resolves within 7 days of surgery- this is mostly from everyone telling them to be so careful of their ears after surgery.

Reasons to call your surgeon’s office

- Persistent fever over 101° F
- Pain that is not relieved with the medications provided
- Increasing redness of the incisions/ears or drainage that looks like pus from the incision
- Trauma to the ears. If something happens during play, sleep etc. that changes the way the ears look after surgery (new bruising or swelling) or makes you suspect a suture has been disrupted