



COCHLEAR IMPLANT

Instructions Following Cochlear Implant Surgery

1. Dressing Care: 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. **Leave it on for 2 days.** It may then be removed and disposed, unless your surgeon instructs otherwise. A cotton ball will be in the ear canal, and it may also be removed and disposed.
2. Pain severity after ear surgery varies greatly from patient to patient but is usually at its worst the first few hours after surgery. While still at the hospital, it is common for patients to need IV pain medicines. Oral pain medications are usually all that is needed thereafter and will be prescribed for home use. These are usually needed for only a few days.
3. Diet is "as tolerated" after surgery. Clear liquids will be given first, and if tolerated, a light food diet can be started that same day. The day after surgery your usual diet can be resumed. Nausea and even vomiting can occur the day of surgery and will be treated with medication as needed. Rarely does a patient need to be prescribed nausea medicine for home use and in such cases, only clear liquids should be given until all nausea has resolved.
4. Your hair may be washed 3 days after surgery. The incision may get wet and water can go down the ear canal at this point, unless your surgeon instructs you otherwise.
5. For the first week, attempt to sleep either on your back or the unoperated ear.
6. Avoid blowing your nose or sniffing for 4 weeks after surgery. If sneezing occurs, do so with the mouth open to avoid buildup of pressure.
7. You may resume non-strenuous activity as soon as you feel like it. Avoid exercising, sports, heavy lifting and air travel for 2 weeks after surgery. The exception is a stationary bike, which can be used 1 week after surgery.
8. Some dizziness and ringing in the ear is normal after surgery. Moderate vertigo may last for a few days. Imbalance can take a few weeks to completely resolve.
9. It is normal for the ear to stand out from the head due to swelling. It will return to its normal position within a few weeks after surgery. You may also have swelling spread into the temple or around the eye on that side. It is also normal to have blood come out your nose and down your throat. This is coming from the ear and will resolve in 1 to 2 weeks.