

Following Ear Surgery, Discharge Information

Patient Information

Ear, Nose and Throat (ENT) Service

Going home after your surgery

You will be able to go home once you have made a full recovery from your anaesthetic.

You may feel drowsy because a small amount of the anaesthetic may still remain in your body; this can slow your reaction time/coordination and affect your reasoning/judgement for the next 24 hours. You should not consume alcohol, make any important decisions, sign any documents (including legal), drive a car, cycle, ride a motorbike or operate heavy machinery for at least 24 hours after your operation.

Some side effects following anaesthesia may include sore/dry throat – this usually resolves within a few days, slight cough, nausea and vomiting, dizziness/feeling faint, headache, shivering, muscle aches/weakness and itchiness/rash.

These are usually temporary and not a problem. Others like nausea; vomiting or mild discomfort can be helped with other medications. Please let your nurse or doctor know if you have nausea and vomiting after your surgery.

Side effects of ear surgery

With some ear surgery you may experience altered taste, numbness of your ear, mild dizziness or loss of balance. These symptoms are usually temporary and will normally resolve over time.

Pain Relief

You can take Paracetamol (Panadol) 2 tablets (1 gram) every 4-6 hours. Do not exceed more than 8 tablets (4 grams) over a 24 hour period.

You have been
given.....at.....am/pm

Do not take anymore until.....am/pm

Do not take any aspirin, disprin (blood thinning tablets) or anti-inflammatory tablets (voltaren, ibuprofen, and paracoxib/tenoxicam) unless it is prescribed / advised.

Medications

It takes about a week to get most of your strength and energy back. It is normal to feel tired or have slight pain and discomfort around the surgery site. Unless advised otherwise continue with your medications as prescribed. If you are prescribed antibiotics, please complete the course. Please place ear drops on to the ear canal dressing sponge if prescribed.

Ear packing instructions

Following your ear surgery operation you may have a dressing (packing) in the ear canal. If you have ear canal packing in place **do not** remove it. The packing will be removed at your follow-up outpatient appointment. Some ear dressings require drops to be placed onto the sponge in the ear canal to keep it moist.

You can trim any exposed loose ends of the ear packing using a clean pair of sharp

[continued]

scissors. Do not try to reinsert the ear canal packing.

The ear canal packing can cause a temporary hearing loss and you may find that your voice clarity alters.

You can change the outer ear cotton wool as required.

Ear discharge

A small amount of discharge can be expected from the ear. You will need to see your own family doctor (GP) if;

- The amount of discharge increases
- The discharge becomes offensive smelling
- You have increasing pain
- Your ear/ wound becomes red and swollen

Activity

Avoid bending over, heavy lifting or straining for 2 to 3 weeks after your operation.

Can I get my ear wet?

Your ear must be kept dry. Avoid getting water in or around your ear.

When washing your hair hold a cup or a similar container over your ear.

Avoid all water sports until you have had your follow-up outpatient appointment. You can then discuss with the doctor when you can start them again.

When am I able to fly?

Avoid flying or making any plans to fly until you have had your follow-up outpatient appointment and the ear canal packing has been removed. You can then discuss with the doctor when you are able to fly.

Follow-up:

An outpatient appointment will be sent for you to be seen in: _____

If you are concerned about any aspect of your procedure please contact your own GP, in the first instance. If urgent, please visit your local emergency department or ring 111 for ambulance assistance.

Additional comments:

Contact us

Wellington Hospital Main Outpatient Department, ENT Services

Phone: (04) 385 59999 ext. 80400

Hours: Monday to Friday 8am – 4:30pm (excluding public holidays)

