



POST OPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS FOR EXOSTOSES SURGERY

Exostoses are bony lumps that grow within the external ear canal, with normal skin overlying. As they grow, they cause significant narrowing of the ear canal, which may lead to recurrent outer ear infection requiring frequent cleaning and treatment. They need to be surgically removed if they cause hearing loss, ear pain or recurrent infection.

During the operation, an incision is made either through the ear canal or seldomly behind the ear in the hairline. A microscope is used so that great care can be taken to remove the bony lumps with a drill, whilst preserving the skin of the ear canal. The operation takes around 60-90 minutes with dressings placed inside the ear canal at the end.

Recovery from exostoses surgery is generally quick, with most patients discharged on the day of surgery. Dressings are left in the ear canal until removal at the 10-day post-op follow up appointment. The final dressing is simply a small piece of cotton wool. In the first couple of days this will need to be changed several times a day, due to a small amount of bloody ooze, the cotton ball is then removed after 2 days. It is important that the ear canal be kept scrupulously dry when showering (covering a piece of cotton wool with Vaseline and placing it over the ear canal will help) and swimming should be avoided until the ear is fully healed – this can take up to 2 months. Any incision sites should also be kept dry.

There is usually some mild-moderate discomfort after surgery. This may be felt in the jaw joint as it is very close to the ear canal. Panadol or Panadeine should be adequate for this but avoid using Aspirin. You may also experience a sense of dizziness for the first two days, but if there is any severe spinning or rotational sensation, please contact your surgeon. Infection is uncommon, but if you notice any discharge, especially if it is malodorous, or if pain is worsening over time, you should contact your surgeon. Avoid strenuous activities and exercise over the first week or so and you will require 5 days off work to recover. Please ask for a medical certificate if required.