



POST OPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS FOR MASTOIDECTOMY

Mastoidectomy surgery is usually performed because of a skin cyst (cholesteatoma) that has grown into the middle ear. A cholesteatoma is very destructive and can destroy the hearing and balance apparatus in the ear, as well as cause serious infections. The aim of mastoidectomy surgery is to remove the cholesteatoma, to restore hearing and to avoid serious complications of uncontrolled cholesteatoma.

During the operation, an incision is made either through the ear canal or behind the ear, so that the mastoid bone and middle ear can be reached. A cholesteatoma and infected bone are then carefully removed. Medicated dressings are placed inside the ear to help it heal, with stitches or staples closing the incision site.

Recovery from mastoidectomy is relatively quick, with most patients staying in hospital for 24 to 48 hours before going home. The packing inside the ear is either a long piece of medicated gauze, a small sponge wick or dissolvable foam; this must stay there until your surgeon removes it at your follow up appointment. The final dressing is simply a small piece of cotton wool, but this will be removed prior to discharge home. 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 3 months. Any incision sites should also be kept dry until stitches/staples are removed, and the skin has healed.

There is usually some mild-moderate discomfort after surgery. Panadol or Panadeine should be adequate for this but avoid using Aspirin. You may also experience a sense of dizziness for the first week, 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 malodourous, 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 days off work to recover, please ask for a medical certificate if required.

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Follow-up Appointment _____