

Stapedectomy - Home Care Instructions

ACTIVITY

- The first few days should be spent resting quietly in bed or on the couch. You may be drowsy and uncoordinated from the anesthesia and pain medications, so be sure to protect yourself from injury.
- You will require constant supervision for the next 24 hours by a responsible adult.
- **No driving, making legal decisions or operating hazardous equipment for the next 24 hours or any time while you are taking prescription pain medications.**
- Do not lay on your surgical ear.
- Change positions slowly; it is common to feel dizzy or faint upon rising from a seated position.
- Mild vertigo with head movement is normal. Avoid strenuous activity or exercise for two weeks.
- **Blow your nose gently** for the first week after surgery.
- **Open your mouth when sneezing to prevent pressure build up in your ear.**
- **Do not try to "pop" your ears** by holding your nose and forcing air into your ears.
- **Do not let water get into your ears** during bathing or showering. Place a cotton ball covered with Vaseline into the ear canal to protect from water.
- **Avoid flying or extreme altitude changes.**
- **Hearing will fluctuate throughout the healing process.**

DIET

Begin with clear liquids such as apple juice, popsicles and water. Advance diet as tolerated.

PAIN

- Pain above or in front of the ear is common when chewing.
- **Taking prescribed pain medication around the clock for the first two days is recommended.** Set an alarm clock throughout the night so that pain does not get out of control by morning. Take medication with food to prevent nausea. You may take an OTC stool softener or drink plenty of fluids and fruit juices to prevent constipation.
- You may **CHANGE** to Tylenol after a few days if doing well, but **DO NOT** take additional Tylenol with your prescription.
- Avoid Ibuprofen (Motrin and Advil) and Aspirin due to the increased risk of bleeding.

YOUR NEXT DOSE OF _____ CAN BE GIVEN AT _____ TODAY.

DRESSING

- Remove Band-Aid the day after surgery and replace with clean cotton ball.

BLEEDING

- Blood tinged, watery drainage is expected from the ear; replace the cotton ball daily and as needed.
- Profuse bright red bleeding from the ear is **NOT NORMAL**. Go to the emergency room or call 911.

When to CALL YOUR DOCTOR (CALL 208-336-4368 TO REACH YOUR PHYSICIAN)

- Severe, unrelenting vertigo even when you are not moving.
- A fever of 101 degrees for more than 24 hours.
- Pain that is not controlled by your prescription pain medication.
- **Persistent** nausea and vomiting lasting more than 24 hours.

When to go to the EMERGENCY ROOM

- If you have difficulty breathing or shortness of breath.
- Uncontrollable bright red bleeding from your ear.
- If you are unable to reach your physician and need help.