

KAROL A. GUTOWSKI, MD
ANDREA MARTIN, MD

AFTER CARE INSTRUCTIONS for
OTOPLASTY (EAR RESHAPING)

MEDICATIONS

- **You may be prescribed narcotic pain medication, which you should take as directed and as needed for pain. Do not exceed the prescribed amount, unless instructed by your surgeon.**
 - Wean yourself off narcotic medication as soon as you are able.
 - Take over-the-counter Tylenol (acetaminophen) on a scheduled basis (Ex.: 650mg every 4 hours, or 1000mg every 6 hours) starting on your day of surgery. *If you have liver problems, do not take acetaminophen, unless you have discussed this with your doctor.*
 - **DO NOT TAKE MORE THAN 4000 mg of acetaminophen per a day.**
 - Your narcotic medication may also contain acetaminophen, so you need to be aware of your total dose from all medications you are using.

 - Ibuprofen (i.e. Advil, Motrin) or naproxen (Aleve) may be started the same day as your surgery and may be used together with your narcotic pain medications and/or with acetaminophen.
 - *However, do not use ibuprofen or naproxen if you have had problems with stomach ulcers, kidney problems or if you have been told by a doctor not to use nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs).*
 - Wean yourself off acetaminophen and/or ibuprofen/naproxen as soon as you are able.
 - Purchase an over-the-counter stool softener (Metamucil, Colace) while taking narcotic pain medication. This helps avoid constipation.
- You may resume taking your routine medications unless your physician instructs you differently.

DIET

- You may eat a regular diet.

ACTIVITY

- **IMPORTANT: To decrease the risk of blood clots after surgery, you should walk regularly, and flex your calf muscles. Except during your normal sleeping time, get up and walk around for at least 5 minutes every hour.**
- **SHOWER:** You may shower or bathe 2 days after surgery, but cover your head so that the head wrap or dressing does not get wet.
 - Ears should be kept completely dry for 7 days after your procedure.
 - **DO NOT** swim, or use a whirlpool for 4 weeks or if there are any openings in the incisions.
- **SLEEPING:** For 3 days, sleep with your head & shoulders elevated on at least 2 pillows to help reduce swelling. Avoid sleeping on your ears.
- **Avoid bending over for the first week after surgery.**
- Do **NOT** push, pull, or lift anything heavier than 20 pounds (about the weight of a 2 gallons of milk) for 1 week.
- Do **NOT** do any strenuous activity or exercise/ activities (running, weightlifting, aerobics, vacuuming) for 2 weeks. After you start exercising, go slowly over 1 to 2 weeks until you are comfortable with more strenuous exercises.

- Do **NOT** engage in any sexual activity for at least 2 weeks; resume when completely comfortable.
- Do **NOT** drive or handle heavy machinery while taking narcotic pain medication or muscle relaxant medications.
- After the head wrap is removed, you may gently wash your ear in the shower, allowing the water to run over it. You may also gently clean the outside of the ear with a Q-tip.

INCISION MANAGEMENT

- Leave the head wrap on until your follow up appointment

HEAD WRAP AFTER 1 WEEK

- To maintain ear shape after the initial head wrap is removed, continue to wear a head band for an additional 3 weeks. It is particularly important to wear it while sleeping to prevent the ear from being distorted.

WHAT ELSE TO EXPECT

- Swelling and minor bleeding from the incisions. If you have a continuous bloody drip or if you are experiencing pain which is not relieved by pain medication, call your surgeon immediately.
- Pain and discomfort for 3 to 4 weeks, although it should gradually get better after the first 2 to 3 days.
- If there are any sutures to remove, it will be done after 7 to 10 days.
- Expect some numbness at the surgical site, it will improve in a few days.

WHEN TO CALL DR. GUTOWSKI or DR. MARTIN

- Fever over 101.5 for 2 readings taken 4 hours apart.
- Marked increase in redness, swelling, or pain around incision or drains.
- Any excessive bleeding or drainage from your incisions.
- Pain is not relieved by prescription medication.
- Persistent problems with nausea or vomiting
- **CHEST PAIN or TROUBLE BREATHING: CALL 911 or go to an Emergency Room**