

Cochlear Implant **Post Operative Instructions**

Nurse Line (8:30am to 5pm) **937-496-0261**
Emergency After Hours Line **937-496-2600**

Effects of Anesthesia

Cochlear implantation involves a brief anesthesia, typically 1-2 hours. Patients may be quite irritable for several hours after surgery. If sedatives were given, some patients will remain sleepy for much of the day. Nausea and vomiting are occasionally seen, and usually resolve by the evening of surgery - even without additional medications.

Medications:

- You will be given pain medication to use as needed after surgery. Pain is usually not severe and regular Tylenol can be taken for mild pain as long as it is not taken with prescription pain medication.
- You will be given an antibiotic to take as directed for the week after surgery.
- Continue to avoid any blood thinners for one week after surgery. These include aspirin and aspirin-like products (Advil, Motrin, Excedrin, Alieve, Celebrex, Naproxyn). Patients who take daily blood thinning medications will be given specific instructions on when to stop and restart these medications.

Surgical Site Instructions:

- You will have an incision behind the ear that is closed with sutures, staples or skin glue.
- Remove the bulky dressing 24 hours after surgery
- You may wash your hair after the bandage is removed, but keep your ear and incision dry until seen by your surgeon about one week after surgery

Expectations and Limitations after Surgery:

- Dizziness and unsteadiness is common for 1-2 weeks after surgery, this may limit your return to work or what you can do at work.
- You will not be able to use your hearing aid in the operated side and will not hear until the device is activated generally at 3 weeks after implantation.

- Tinnitus and fullness in the ear is not unusual.
- You may experience a change in taste, a metallic taste or a numb feeling on the tongue. This should resolve with time.
- Do not blow your nose for 3 weeks after surgery.
- If you sneeze, do so with an open mouth for 3 weeks after surgery.
- NO SWIMMING until cleared by your surgeon
- You cannot have an MRI while a cochlear implant is in place, unless the magnet is surgically removed. If this is necessary you would need to contact your surgeon.
- Most patients can return to work within 1-2 weeks of surgery
- Avoid the following for 3 weeks after surgery:
 - Vigorous exercise
 - Bending below the waist or stooping
 - Lifting > 20 pounds

Medical Alert Bracelet:

- You may wear a medical alert bracelet to indicate you have a magnet implanted and you cannot have an MRI
- These can be ordered from the Medic Alert Foundation; the website is www.medicalert.org

Reasons to call your surgeon's office

- Persistent fever over 101° F
- Pain that is not relieved by your medications
- Purulent or foul smelling drainage (pus) from the incision or the ear canal
- Excessive swelling or bleeding from the incision
- Vertigo with associated nausea lasting more than a week after implantation
- Facial weakness