

Post-operative Instructions Patching of the Eardrum

Please review the general preoperative instructions. For the first few days after surgery, you are encouraged to rest. **Do not participate in any strenuous activity which may raise your blood pressure or heart rate** until your doctor believes you are adequately healed - this includes going to work if your job requires physical exertion. Do not exercise, lift weights or participate in any sports. Do not, however, sit on the couch or lay in bed all day. Get up and walk around as this will help prevent complications. Expect to miss a few days of work after your surgery. When to resume normal activities can be discussed during your post-operative visits. In the meantime, *resume all of your routine medications* prescribed by your physicians with the exception of aspirin, ibuprofen, Advil, Motrin, Aleve or any other blood thinning medications such as plavix and/or coumadin (warfarin).

You may be given a large ear dressing to protect the ear after surgery and to apply pressure to the operative site. The dressing may be removed for the first time the day after surgery. After the dressing is removed, **it is normal for the ears to have a small amount of bloody drainage for a few days**. A small piece of cotton may be needed for absorption.

Water should not be allowed to enter the ear - this may result in pain, infection and possibly failure of the patch/graft. *Swimming is not permitted* until cleared by your doctor. Additionally, *care must be taken when bathing or washing the hair*. Cotton mixed lightly with Vaseline can be carefully placed in the ear canal prior to bathing and removed afterwards.

Do not blow your nose until cleared by your doctor after surgery. The increase in air pressure may blow the graft/patch out of position and result in a failure to heal the hole in the eardrum. **If you have the urge to sneeze, do not hold it in** as this can cause the same results.

Some moderate pain is to be expected. The nurse may give you pain medication prior to your discharge from the recovery room. The doctor has also given you a prescription for pain medication. Always take pain medication with or after food. **Do not take any pain medications except for the prescription you were given or plain Tylenol**. (All other over the counter pain medications increase the risk of bleeding after surgery).