

# DREW S. SAWYER, M.D.

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## OTOLARYNGOLOGY

### **Ear Surgery Post-operative Instructions**

#### **Directions:**

If you have a head dressing in place, leave this in place for 24 hours.

Do not allow any water to enter the operated ear. Protect the ear when showering or washing the hair with a cotton ball coated with Vaseline. It is a good idea to have someone help you with washing the scalp to avoid water. When finished washing, remove the coated cotton, wipe the ear with a soft paper tissue and place a clean, dry cotton ball. A little antibiotic ointment may help the cotton ball stick and stay in place. A shower cap provides extra protection.

Thick, dark, or bloody ear drainage is expected during the first week after surgery. You may clean the crusting from the outer part of the ear with peroxide and Q-tips. Replace the cotton ball in the ear with a clean, dry piece when the current one is soiled. Occasionally, you may see brown or dark red pieces of packing (Gelfoam) extruding from the ear canal. Do not attempt to replace them or to remove the remaining pieces that are still in the ear canal.

Do not blow your nose for at least two weeks from the day of surgery. Blowing can build excessive pressure in the operated ear and displace the reconstructed or grafted eardrum.

If you have to sneeze, please do it with your mouth wide open to avoid pressure build up in your ear.

When sleeping, try to sleep on the unoperated ear.

You have dissolvable packing in your ear that will absorb over 3-4 weeks. Your ear will feel plugged and your hearing will be diminished until the packing absorbs.

#### **Medications:**

Start the ear drops prescribed to you 1 week post-operatively.

Typically Tylenol or ibuprofen is sufficient for pain control. Occasionally you may need a stronger pain medication for 2-3 days post-operatively. This will be prescribed the day of surgery.

Complete the antibiotics as prescribed.

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### **When to Call After Surgery:**

Fever >101.5

Persistent nausea or vomiting or severe dizziness/vertigo

Persistent drainage from the ear for more than 3-4 days post-operatively

Severe headache

Facial paralysis (Inability to close the eye and crooked smile like in Bell's palsy)

### **Who to Call After Surgery:**

If you are experiencing an emergency call 911 or go to your nearest emergency room.

During business hours (M-F 8:15AM-4:30PM) call the clinic at 512-593-5200.

For after-hours issues that cannot wait until the next business day, please call the answering service at 512-323-5465 and ask for the doctor on call for Dr. Sawyer (ENT).