

## Post-Operative Instructions Exostoses Removal / Exostectomy

### Care of the ear / Wounds

Exostectomy surgery is now usually performed through the ear canal, via a small keyhole incision at the front of the ear. You will have dissolving sutures in the wound (<1cm) and then a cotton ball in the outer ear. Within the ear canal will be a sponge cylindrical wick and 2 plastic strips. These are designed to keep the ear canal skin in its new position whilst it is healing. This canal packing material must be left in place for 2 weeks and will be removed by your surgeon at your first post-operative visit.

Every day you should remove the cotton ball, and then instil a few antibiotic ear drops onto the canal sponge packing. Then place a fresh new cotton ball into the outer ear again.

### Fatigue

The general anaesthetic, surgery and medications may cause you to feel fatigued.

### Pain

Generally, there is only minimal post-operative pain. It is sometimes a little uncomfortable when you chew food for a few days. Simple analgesia (painkillers) are generally all that is required but the anaesthetist will ensure that you have stronger painkillers if needed.

### Showering

Due to the keyhole approach, you can shower and wash your hair **from day 1**, but you **MUST AVOID** water *entering* the ear canal. This is best achieved by replacing the dry cotton ball with one that has been smeared all over with Vaseline. Any Vaseline which goes into the ear canal will not cause any problems at all. After your shower, throw away the Vaseline cotton ball and replace with a fresh dry one.

Do not use earplugs or re-useable plugs due to the risk of infection. A one-off cotton ball with Vaseline is preferred.

Otherwise keep the ear as dry as possible. No swimming for 6 weeks (at least) after surgery.

### Exercise

Avoid strenuous exercise, golf, weights, gym for 2 weeks after surgery to avoid any bleeding. There must be no water sports or submerging of the head, eg swimming, surfing until the ear is completely healed (usually 6 weeks).

### Flying

Usually there will be no involvement of the eardrum or middle ear and so flying is possible, but it is generally advisable to avoid flying if possible until 2 weeks post op, when your packing comes out and the surgeon has reviewed your wound.

### Fluids and oral intake

It is important to stay well hydrated in the post-operative period. A normal diet can be taken.

## **Bleeding**

In the event of significant bleeding (generally anything over a teaspoon or continuous oozing) please seek urgent medical assistance, either by contacting the rooms or attending the nearest hospital with an emergency department. This is a very rare occurrence.

Slight blood staining on the cotton ball is common and not of concern. For minor bleeding of this nature, simply replace with a fresh cotton ball as necessary. Let the surgeon know if this does not settle down.

## **Post Operative Timetable:**

2 weeks        First post op review. Packing will be removed from ear canal, which will also restore hearing. During this first 2 weeks, no strenuous exercise and change your cotton ball every day, applying some ear drops to the ear canal.

4 weeks        Second post op review. Some cleaning of the ear canal is often necessary, as the new skin is maturing. During this period you can resume dry sporting activities but should still not overexert yourself. Hearing should be normal during this time.

6 weeks        Final post op review. Usually the skin has now completely healed and you will be permitted to resume water activities such as surfing and swimming.