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Otolaryngology - Head and Neck Surgery
Hearing, balance, skull base, and facial nerve disorders
Allergy management and Endoscopic Sinus Surgery

INSTRUCTIONS FOR POSTOPERATIVE CARE OF YOUR EARS
COCHLEAR IMPLANT

Your new Cochlear Implant was placed through an incision behind your ear. You will have a head dressing wrapped around your head after surgery. The dressing can be removed on the first day after surgery. Under the dressing will be some gauze over the incision behind your ear. You can remove this along with the head dressing. Most of your stitches will be under the skin and absorbed by your body.

There is a cotton ball in your ear canal that you can remove the day after surgery. When showering, it is critical **NOT TO GET ANY WATER IN THE EAR CANAL!** Use a vasoline coated cotton ball when showering or bathing. **DO NOT GET THE POSTAURICULAR INCISION WET FOR 2 days;** after that you can shower. Apply antibiotic ointment to the postauricular incision 2 times daily (e.g – Bacitracin) for one week and then daily for one month.

Due to the incision behind the ear, your ear may be numb for several months following surgery. You may also have taste disturbances or a metallic taste that can last for weeks to months. This is due to a nerve called the chorda tympani that gives taste to front part of the tongue and can be stretched during surgery.

You should participate in light activity only for the 1st week after surgery (ie – walking only, no running or strenuous exercise). Do not lift anything heavier than 20 pounds.

There should be some mild pain after surgery and this should subside in a few days. We will give you a prescription for pain medication that you should use only as needed. If you use Aspirin daily, please don't restart until after 48 hours. You may use over-the-counter ibuprofen or naproxen after 24 hours. If you are uncertain about the use of a medicine, please call this office.

Call this office immediately if you develop fever, excessive pain or drainage from behind the ear. The office number is 616-249-8000.

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