

POSTOPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS FOR STAPEDECTOMY



Stapedectomy is performed under general anesthesia. Surgery typically lasts 1-2 hours. You will typically spend 2-3 hours in recovery before being discharged home. If you are dizzy or nauseated in the recovery room, you may spend the night in the hospital and go home the following day.

Postoperative medications: Take all home medications except for any blood thinners. You will receive a prescription for pain medication to take as needed. If you do not need prescription pain medication, you may take plain Tylenol. Do not take the prescription pain medication and Tylenol at the same time. Depending on your case, you may also receive a prescription for prednisone and/or a medication for dizziness, such as diazepam or meclizine.

Diet: There are no dietary restrictions after stapedectomy.

Activity: Avoid strenuous activity until cleared by your surgeon. You should avoid straining and lifting anything more than 15 pounds. Do not drive while on pain medications or if you are experiencing dizziness. Do not travel by airplane until cleared by your surgeon.

Dressing and wound care: You will be discharged home with a dressing wrapped around your head. You should cut the dressing off the morning after surgery. There will be a gauze covering your ear which you should also remove. There will be a cotton ball coated in antibiotic ointment in the outer ear. You should replace this with a new cotton ball coated in antibiotic ointment (Neosporin) 2 times a day. There may be some packing material in the ear canal under this cotton ball. Do not try to remove any of this packing from the ear canal. Cover the incision in front of your ear with antibiotic ointment twice daily. You may shower and wash your hair 48 hours after surgery. Change your cotton ball after your shower and try to avoid spraying water directly into the ear. Do not worry if your dressing falls off early. Simply follow the instructions above with regard to wound care.

What to expect:

1. Your ear will have a “blocked” or “stuffy” feeling and hearing will be muffled for several weeks after surgery.
2. You may have some slight bloody discharge onto the cotton ball.
3. You may experience some slight dizziness or imbalance.
4. Temporary alteration of sense of taste

When to call:

1. Fever greater than 102 F
2. Uncontrolled or worsening pain
3. Severe vertigo (spinning sensation), nausea, vomiting