

POST-OP INSTRUCTIONS

Cochlear Implant

What to Expect After Surgery

- **Medications:** If antibiotics are prescribed, please take them as directed until they are all gone. You may take pain medication as needed. Prescription pain medications cause drowsiness, somnolence, nausea and constipation. Please refrain from driving, operating machinery or making important decisions when taking prescription pain medications.
- **Potential Symptoms After Surgery:** You may notice numbing or tingling of the skin around your implant. This will improve with time. Sometimes there is a slight taste disturbance or metallic taste; this usually resolves over several weeks. Dizziness or imbalance may occur and will improve.
- **Post-operative Visits:** You should have an appointment to see your surgeon 1 week after surgery. If you have staples, these will be removed at your first follow up appointment; removal is simple and does not require anesthesia. You may experience brief, slight discomfort during staple removal. Your processor will be placed by an audiologist about 3-4 weeks after surgery, after your surgeon determines you have healed properly. You will be scheduled for additional visits with your surgeon and your audiologist after processor fitting. Yearly check-ups and hearing tests are also recommended.

Post-operative Care Instructions

- When sleeping, try to sleep on the unoperated side.
- If you have gauze wrapped around your head and ear, removed the gauze the morning after your surgery; this is most easily done by taking a pair of scissors to cut through the gauze. If you are given a plastic ear cup, take this off the morning after surgery by detaching the Velcro® straps. You may then wear the plastic ear cup as needed to protect your implant when you sleep or during other activities.
- Keep your incision dry for 48 hours after surgery. Afterwards, you may allow the incision to get wet, but do not scrub at the incision or allow the incision to soak underwater. After 48 hours, you may clean the incision with soap and water, then apply some antibiotic ointment (such as bacitracin) twice daily. You may also gently clean any crusting that may form with peroxide and Q-tips®.
- It is okay to get water inside your ear canal.

When to Call After Surgery

- Severe attacks of dizziness or vertigo or intractable vomiting
- Excessive swelling, redness, or foul-smelling drainage from the incision
- Severe headache, confusion, drowsiness, light sensitivity, and neck stiffness
- Temperature above 102°F
- Facial paralysis on the operated side (inability to close the eye and crooked smile).

Please note: We do not refill prescription pain medications over the phone and we are unable to refill your medications on weekends or after hours. For prescription refills, please call during office hours.