



These instructions apply to most common ear operations (such as eardrum repair or mastoid surgery). Your surgeon may give you specific additional advice – please follow that if it differs from this leaflet.

What to expect:

- Your hearing may be reduced or blocked due to packing inside the ear. This is normal and should improve once the packing is removed.
- You may notice popping, crackling or ringing noises in your ear – this is common and usually settles.
- Mild dizziness or imbalance can occur for a few days after surgery and should gradually improve.
- Some discharge or staining on the dressing is normal, especially if packing is present.

After care:

- If you have a bandage around your head leave this on for 24-48 hours or as advised.
- You may have a piece of cotton wool at the entrance of your ear canal; remove this when you take off your head bandage.
- You may have packing inside your ear (BIPP dressing/Gel foam):
 - It may cause some discharge.
 - Do not remove it yourself.
 - If it becomes loose, you may carefully trim the outer part only.
 - Gel foam will slowly dissolve and cause a jelly like discharge.
 - BIPP dressings will require removal in the ENT nurse-led clinic.
- Keep your ear completely dry until you are reviewed in clinic:
 - When showering, use cotton wool coated with petroleum jelly to protect the ear.
 - Do not swim.
- You may benefit from sleeping with your head slightly elevated.
- If you have been given ear drops or antibiotics, use them as prescribed.

Pain relief:

- Mild to moderate pain is common.
- You can take simple pain relief such as paracetamol (and ibuprofen if suitable for you), you may be discharged with stronger pain relief which can be taken instead.
- Contact us if pain becomes severe or is worsening.

Activity restriction (for at least 3 weeks):

- Avoid blowing your nose forcefully (if needed, blow gently one nostril at a time).
- If you need to sneeze, do so with your mouth open.
- Avoid getting your ear wet.
- Avoid heavy lifting, straining, or strenuous activity.
- Avoid flying unless your surgeon advises otherwise (usually at least 6 weeks).
- Avoid smoking as it can delay healing.

Follow up:

- You will be given (or sent) a follow up appointment, usually in a nurse-led ENT clinic.
- The packing in your ear will usually be removed at this appointment.

When to contact ENT (Suite 9 ENT Outpatients or the Surgical Hub):

Please seek advice if you experience:

- Increasing pain.
- Fever.
- Persistent or worsening dizziness.
- Discharge from the ear, especially if foul-smelling.
- Increasing redness or swelling around the ear.
- Nausea or vomiting.
- Any concerns about your recovery.

Attend A&E urgently if you have:

- Heavy or continuous bleeding from your ear.
- New facial weakness or drooping on the side of surgery.
- A severe headache.
- Severe or worsening dizziness.

Contact numbers

If you have any concerns, you can contact:

Suite 9 ENT Outpatients (Monday to Friday 9am-5pm): **02921 843174 (Press 1)**

Surgical Hub (Monday to Friday 7am- 7pm):
02921 826510 or 02921 826348

