



Post-operative Instructions Tympanoplasty and/or Mastoidectomy

- 1. Pain/Bleeding** – Pain and bleeding is variable; mastoidectomy usually produces more pain. Do not perform any exercise, as this will increase the pain as well as bleeding. **Elevation of the head** is an important action in decreasing post-operative pain. **DO NOT take Aspirin, Aspirin containing products, Ibuprofen, Advil®, Motrin®, Vitamin E or Gingko for 2 weeks** after surgery. Do not plan any projects during the first week post-operatively. Take pain medications as prescribed with at least some food in your stomach – remember, the first night will likely bring some nausea from the general anesthetic, therefore no large meals.
- 2. Nose blowing/sneezing** – **Any** nose blowing may displace an eardrum graft and cause a perforation (hole) in the eardrum. Sneezing may cause even more damage to a new eardrum graft. If you must sneeze, try to stop it by **pressing firmly** on your upper lip, otherwise, sneeze with an **open** mouth. **Gentle** nose blowing should be done **sparingly**, if at all. The consequences of these problems are more serious for patients undergoing ossicular chain reconstruction (rebuilding of the small ear bones). The healing process takes 4 – 6 weeks, after which there is minimal risk to sneezing or nose blowing. **It is crucial to follow these instructions for a good post-operative result.**
- 3. Water precautions** – Avoid **all** exposure of the operated ear canal to water. Silicone ear plugs work well for bathing, but they are not effective enough for swimming under water. This activity should be avoided during the first 6 weeks.
- 4. Ear drops** – Ear drops may be prescribed or provided to decrease the risk of post-operative infection. These are not necessary for all cases.
- 5. Rest** – No exercise or excessive bending or lifting as this will increase pain and bleeding.
- 6. Dressing** – After the first day, a dressing will be used which requires changing the gauze within a plastic ear protector 1-2 times each day. The Glasscock Dressing (plastic ear protector) should be worn especially at night to protect the ear, the sutures (stitches) behind the ear, and to collect any drainage from the ear that might occur.