

EAR CORRECTION

Notes for guidance

If you have overly large ears or ears that seem to stick out or are mispositioned, then you may need to consider otoplasty. This ear correction surgery pulls large ears closer to the head and is usually done on children, but adults also find it beneficial in boosting their self-esteem. Children have the hardest time dealing with teasing and being called names based on their appearance. Otoplasty is a common surgery and the improvements to one's appearance are enjoyed by children and adults alike.

What is Otoplasty (Cosmetic Ear Surgery) used for?

Cosmetic ear surgery, or ear correction, is normally performed to pin back a patient's ears that are large or stand out noticeably from the head and make less conspicuous. Some surgeries may also be performed to reduce stretching of the ears. Reconstructive surgeries may also be performed for those with damage to the ears sustained by accidents, or deformities usually seen from the time of birth.

Who are the best candidates for ear surgery?

Before your surgery, your surgeon will give you a complete physical and an individual consultation. You will be able to discuss the procedure with your surgeon; usually anyone that needs the surgery may have it if they fulfill certain health requirements to avoid any unnecessary risks. Usually children are good candidates when the ears are fully developed around age four, and many surgeries are done up to age fourteen to avoid as much teasing as possible during their school years.

Adults also find the procedure advantageous, and more are having otoplasty every year. These surgeries are usually cosmetic, but some people have the surgery to repair damage due to accidents or deformities.

How is the procedure performed?

When a surgeon performs ear surgery to pin back large ears, an incision is made and excess skin and cartilage are removed, and the remaining cartilage is sculpted to obtain the best results. After the work is complete, the incision is sutured and bandages applied to provide pressure and promote healing.

Sutures need to be removed with a follow up visit to your physician in approximately one week. Most surgeries are performed under local or general anesthesia during outpatient surgery, but some patients may need to remain for more observation. Children do much better under general anesthesia, which allows less need to worry over possible movement or fright during the procedure. Most ear surgery can be accomplished within an hour or two, depending on the exact nature of the surgery. Some reconstructive surgery for defects or damage may take longer.

What is the recovery period like?

After your ear correction surgery, you will have bandages applied around your head and on the ears to provide support and to help reduce swelling after the surgery is complete. Most patients have these heavier bandages removed within a few days. In about a week sutures are removed at your follow up visit and your physician will determine the need for lighter bandages or a head-strap to provide support; these are to keep the ears in the correct place and provide safety as the ears heal.

Sleeping is a common concern, as the risk of damage to the ears is higher at this time and must be avoided. Within a few weeks, the head-strap is often no longer necessary and the ears are looking better with little sign of the initial bruising and swelling. Most children and adults resume their normal schedules after a week or so, while avoiding more strenuous activities such as sports or hard labor.

Are there any risks or complications from this procedure?

Your physician will discuss with you the risks of any procedure that you may be considering. Every type of surgery will have general risks and your medical history may affect the potential complications. Generally, ear surgeries have the more common risks of bleeding, swelling, bruising and infection. Scarring is usually minimal and hard to see behind the ear. Some patients may have problems with sutures that are loosened or disturbed, and this is more commonly seen in children who aren't as attentive as adults.

Blood clots, hearing loss and extreme reactions to anesthesia are also possible risks that need to be discussed. In some situations there may be problems with the results, where the ears are pulled too close to the head or not close enough, or other symmetry issues.

When will I be able to see the results from my ear correction?

The results may be hard to notice at first with the swelling or bruising, but when the healing is complete most patients love the way their new ears now seem to belong on their head. No longer will your prominent ears seem to be on the wrong body. As a result of your ear correction surgery, you will enjoy having a well-defined and symmetrical facial appearance without having large ears to distract from your beautiful smile.

Further Information

This brochure has been prepared to give a basic understanding of the procedure before a consultation takes place, and to cover many of the questions frequently asked about this type of cosmetic surgery. Final decisions should not be made until an individual assessment has taken place with the surgeon.

There is no obligation on the part of the patient to undergo surgery by attending for consultation.

If you have any further questions or would like to arrange a consultation please fill in the online form on our website at www.surgeryone.co.uk. All enquiries are always treated confidentially.