

SPRINGFIELD ENT & FACIAL PLASTIC SURGERY

3555 South Culpepper Circle
Springfield, Missouri 65804
(417) 887- 3855 / www.springfieldent.com

OTOPLASTY

Surgery for Prominent ears

Please, do not take any non – Tylenol® (non - acetaminophen) pain or cold medication for 2 weeks before or after surgery because this causes increased bruising and bleeding. These medications include Motrin®, ibuprofen, Aleve®, Advil®, aspirin, and others. Garlic and vitamin E can also cause bleeding. If you have any questions, please check with our office.

Although many people note that their ears may seem more prominent than desired, most are unaware that this may be corrected with a simple procedure.

- Ears normally protrude no more than 2 centimeters (3/4" - 7/8") from the side of the head. Individuals may feel their ears are overly prominent if they project beyond this.
- Short hairstyles make prominent ears more noticeable and some patients may feel restricted to longer hair to cover their ears.
- Adults and children are both good candidates for otoplasty.
- Surgery is normally suggested for children after the ages of 5 to 7 years. By this time, the ears have mostly grown to normal size. Also, it is at this age that notice of ear prominence and teasing by peers may start.

The otoplasty procedure

- Incisions are hidden along the back side of the ear. Some excess skin is removed and permanent sutures are placed to achieve the desired shape and position of the ear.
- Surgery may be done in the office surgical suite for adults using local anesthetic and possibly sedation as desired. Children are treated in the operating room with general anesthesia as outpatients and go home the same day.
- The procedure lasts about an hour for one ear and two hours for both.
- A little over – correction is desired initially to bring the ears closer in than the usual 2 centimeters since some relaxation outward usually occurs with healing
- A compressive earmuff type dressing remains on for 5 – 7 days afterward.

After surgery

- Dressing – removed in the office in 5 – 7 days. It will need to be replaced if it loosens or falls off before this.
- Numbness – of the ears should last for a few months and is normal.
- Pain – usually mild. Patients receive a prescription for medication. Again, aspirin, ibuprofen, and similar drugs must be avoided.
- Bruising & swelling – is normal in and around the ears and may take 2 – 3 weeks to resolve. Head elevation and sleeping in a recliner chair for 2 – 3 nights will reduce this.
- Incision care - after removal of the dressing, incisions must be kept moist with antibiotic ointment placed 4 times daily for 10 days or until healed. Crusting should be softened with ointment and gently removed with hydrogen peroxide and a Q - tip.
- Sutures – are normally self dissolving or may require removal a week after surgery.
- Bathing - keep the ears dry until the dressing is removed and then bathing / showering is OK.
- Driving - should be avoided 1 - 2 days after surgery, while on pain medication, or if the dressing decreases your hearing.
- Diet - no restrictions.

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Scheduling and preparation for surgery

- Scheduling - may be done during a cosmetic consultation or at a later date by telephone as patients prefer.
- Preoperative visit – a brief office appointment will be needed for otoplasty done at the hospital or surgery center to perform a physical examination, accomplish paperwork, and answer questions
- Preoperative medical clearance – patients with medical problems may require clearance before surgery or general anesthesia by their regular physician.
- Hospital / surgery center appointment – for patients undergoing general anesthesia to register and accomplish hospital paperwork and have an anesthesia interview.
- Postoperative visits - office visits held 5 to 7 days after surgery, and then typically 1, 6, and 12 months afterward.
- Photographs - taken before surgery and at various times afterward.

Potential risks

Otoplasty is a very safe procedure. However, it is important to recognize that even the most minor surgery may result in infection, bleeding, reaction to anesthesia, or even death. Although unlikely, possible risks include:

- Unfavorable healing, scarring, or prominence of the incisions.
- Permanent ear numbness (temporary numbness is expected).
- Asymmetry. Everyone has some difference from one side of the face to the other. Some degree of asymmetry exists before surgery and should be expected afterward.
- Blood or fluid collection under the skin that would require drainage.
- Cosmetic surgery and smoking never mix. Patients must be comfortable stopping smoking for 3 weeks before surgery and until healing is complete. Even with this, smokers have increased risk of infection and unfavorable healing. Plus, smoking accelerates the appearance of skin aging!
- Although uncommon, any cosmetic surgery might benefit from a "touch - up," procedure.

Thank you for the opportunity to participate in your health care. Please let us know how we may make your treatment experience more pleasant!

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