

Ear surgery for prominent ears

(Otoplasty)

What is otoplasty?

Otoplasty is ear surgery that is done to reshape the outer ear.

It may be done to change:

- An abnormality from birth or injury.
- The shape, position or size of the ear.



When is this surgery done?

Surgery is done when the ear cartilage is stable enough for correction. This is normally around 7 to 10 years of age. Timing of surgery will depend on how severe the problem is, and the feelings of the child. It is important to know that often times, insurance companies will not cover this surgery.

How is it done?

- There might be incisions made on the front of the ear, the back of the ear, or both. It depends on the surgery.
- Incisions are most often made on the creases or folds of the ear. This will make the scars less visible once healed.
- Some sutures (stitches) are under the skin of the ear. These internal stitches will dissolve on their own. There may also be sutures on the skin of the ear. Most of the time these external sutures will also dissolve, and do not have to be removed.

After the surgery

- This is an outpatient surgery. Your child will go home the day of surgery.
- There may be a large dressing around your child's head and ears. If there is a dressing, it will stay on until your child sees the doctor in the clinic a few days after surgery.
- If needed, pain medicine may be given for a few days after surgery.

Diet:

- Your child will have an IV (intravenous) line. The IV is used to give medicine and/or fluids after the surgery.
- When awake after surgery, your child will be offered clear liquids. Solid foods will be added as tolerated.

Activity:

- Your child will not be able to take part in rough play, sports, or go to gym class for 4 to 6 weeks. The surgeon will let you know when your child can return to normal activities.
- To decrease swelling, it is helpful to keep your child's head elevated about 30 degrees for one to two weeks.
- Your child will need follow up appointments in clinic with the surgeon.
- Your child may need to wear a headband for 2 to 4 weeks. It is important to follow the directions of your child's surgeon.

ALERT: Call your child's doctor, nurse, or clinic if you have any concerns or if your child has:

- Severe pain that does not stop.
- A fever of 101 degrees or higher.
- Severe nausea or vomiting.
- Redness or swelling on the ears or along the incisions.
- Drainage or bleeding from the ear incisions.
- Special health care needs not covered by this information.

This sheet was created to help you care for your child or family member. It does not take the place of medical care. Talk with your healthcare provider for diagnosis, treatment and follow-up.