



Department of Otolaryngology-Head and Neck Surgery

**POST OPERATIVE CARE INSTRUCTIONS FOLLOWING
COCHLEAR IMPLANTATION**

The following instructions will help you know what to expect in the days following ear surgery. Please call if you have any questions or concerns.

Physical Activities: There are limitations on activity until the incision behind the ear heals. Your child should limit activities for the first few days after surgery. Thereafter, a slow increase in activity is fine. Your child may return to school in 3-5 days after surgery depending on how he/she feels. Please do not participate in gym or swimming until your doctor has approved resuming these activities.

Diet: Normal.

Pain: Tylenol (acetaminophen) may be given to relieve any discomfort. Follow the directions on the bottle. Avoid medication containing aspirin, ibuprofen, or other anti-inflammatory medication for ten (10) days. We will give you a prescription for Tylenol with Codeine for pain not controlled by regular plain Tylenol. Pain should diminish with time. Please call if it is getting worse rather than better. See the back of this sheet for Tylenol (acetaminophen) dosages. Use Tylenol with Codeine as directed by your child's physician.

Drainage: During the first week after surgery, there may be some blood-tinged discharge from the ear. Some bleeding immediately following surgery is not uncommon. There may also be some drainage from the incision behind the ear. This is not worrisome.

Fever: A low-grade fever (less than 101F) may occur and should be treated with Tylenol (acetaminophen). If the fever persists or becomes higher than 101.5F, please call.

Care of the Incision: Please leave the ear dressing on for one (1) day. After you remove the dressing, please apply antibiotic ointment (such as bacitracin or triple antibiotic) to the incision behind the ear 2 times a day. We usually use absorbable sutures to close this incision and these do not need to be removed. Some swelling is normal. If your child develops a painful tender swelling behind the ear or foul smelling drainage from the ear incision or ear canal, please call, as we will need to evaluate your child promptly.

Keep Ears Dry: Do not swim or shower until we have given you clearance to do so.

Washing Hair: Please follow your doctor's specific instructions regarding washing hair. When you are told to start washing the hair again, please use baby shampoo.

Initial Activation: Two to three weeks after surgery, you will be seen by our pediatric cochlear implant audiologist for initial activation. This is an exciting and sometimes anxious time for the family as you anticipate your child's first hearing experience. You will have a series of subsequent appointments scheduled to adjust your child's implant settings. Appointments will generally become less frequent over time.

Rare Complications: Cochlear implantation is a common and safe operation performed routinely on infants and young children. Risks associated with cochlear implant are rare, but can include temporary or permanent weakness of the face, breakage of the device, imbalance or dizziness, infection, or bleeding. While these complications are uncommon, we feel it is important that you be aware that they are possible. Please remember that the device is intended to last a long time, but small problems can occur along the way and we are here to help you with them.

Follow Up: Please arrange to see us 7-14 days after surgery.

PLEASE CALL IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS!

Office phone number 314-454-6162 / Monday - Friday 8:30 AM – 4:30 PM. After regular hours, call 314-454-6000 and have the operator contact the ENT resident on call.

Richard Chole, M.D., Ph.D.

Keiko Hirose, M.D.

Tim Hullar, M.D., FACS

Please remember to have your child's pneumococcal vaccine updated before surgery!