



MOUNT AUBURN HOSPITAL

**TAYLOR & SULLIVAN PLASTIC SURGERY**  
**HELENA O. TAYLOR, MD, PhD, FACS**  
**STEPHEN R. SULLIVAN, MD, MPH, FACS**

300 Mount Auburn St Ste 304  
Cambridge, MA 02138

Phone: 617-492-0620 FAX: 617-492-0631

[www.massplasticsurgeons.com](http://www.massplasticsurgeons.com)

**OTOPLASTY AFTERCARE INSTRUCTIONS**



HARVARD MEDICAL SCHOOL  
TEACHING HOSPITAL

- In the week before your Otoplasty (Ear Setback) Surgery:
  - Consider eating pineapple, it may help reduce bruising
  - Complete schoolwork or household chores
  - Follow preoperative instructions with eating, drinking, and medications
- Postoperatively, get out of bed and walk (with assistance) every few hours after your operation to decrease the chance of postoperative problems such as blood clots.
- Practice 15-20 deep breaths every hour to keep your lungs open.
- After Otoplasty surgery, it is important for you to have someone available to stay with you for the first 24 hours, as you may feel drowsy. You may require help the first few times you get out of bed.
- Please take your medications as directed by Dr. Taylor or Dr. Sullivan to manage discomfort or symptoms.
  - Acetaminophen (Tylenol) every 8 hours, space doses 4 hours after Ibuprofen so one or the other is taken every 4 hours
  - Ibuprofen (Motrin) every 8 hours, space doses 4 hours after Acetaminophen so one or the other is taken every 4 hours
  - Oxycodone 5 mg – 1-2 tablets every 6 hours as needed for pain, though many patients may not need it
  - Adults may also have:
    - Gabapentin 300 mg every 8 hours for 7 days
    - Vitamin C 500 mg daily for 50 days
    - Colace 100 mg twice daily to prevent constipation, it is important to have a bowel movement each day
    - Zofran 8 mg every 8 hours if needed for nausea
    - Scopolamine patch may be placed on the neck on the day of surgery and can stay for 3 days to prevent nausea

**DIET**

- Eat a light diet for 2-3 days and avoid spicy food. Some suggestions to ease abdominal discomfort or indigestion after surgery:
  - Drink water or warm liquids

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- Prune juice to prevent constipation

**WOUND CARE**

- You may have a head wrap dressing. The dressing will usually removed by Dr. Taylor or Dr. Sullivan one week after Otoplasty (Ear Setback) surgery. You can then wear an athletic headband or cloth headband for another 2 weeks day and night and for 6 weeks at night while sleeping.
- You may shower or sponge bath the day after the operation, but keep your headwrap dressing dry. After your dressings has been removed, you may wash your hair with a gentle shampoo and conditioner and your face with a gentle soap. Avoid snagging the ears with a brush or comb.
- Elevate your head and shoulders and when in bed keep your head elevated about 30 degrees (two pillows under your head and back) to help with the swelling.
- Do not smoke or expose yourself to smokers or nicotine as ear skin and wounds can be compromised.
- You may apply ice packs to the headwrap dressing, and once removed, to the ears for comfort and to reduce swelling. Bags of frozen peas and corn make for excellent ice packs. You might also consider Icewraps Gel Packs or Swiss Safe gel packs, which can be ordered from Amazon or online. Apply the ice packs for 20 min of each hour while awake. Do not put significant pressure on the ears.
- Your hair may be dried with a blow dryer on a cool, not a hot, setting. Hair coloring or use of hair products should be delayed until 3 weeks after surgery or when all wounds are healed and there are no crusts or scabs.
- Some bleeding from the incisions is expected for 3 to 4 days and may be seen on the head wrap.
- Sutures will be removed by Dr. Taylor and Dr. Sullivan approximately 7 – 10 days postoperatively

**ACTIVITY**

- For the first week following Otoplasty (Ear Setback) surgery, raising your blood pressure and heart rate can cause bleeding. Avoid straining or vigorous activity. We recommend walking 2 to 3 times per day for 15 minutes. Do not lift anything heavier than 10-20 lbs, run, lift weights, or perform strenuous exercise for 7-10 days
- Avoid contact sports for 6 weeks following Otoplasty (Ear Setback) surgery.

**GENERAL OUTCOMES**

- Moderate swelling and bumpiness of your ears is to be expected and will increase for 48 to 72 hours. Much of the swelling usually resolves within the first few weeks after Otoplasty (Ear Setback) surgery though some mild swelling can take one full year to resolve. Please be patient.
- Tightness of the skin and fuller appearing ear features is also normal and will smooth out as the swelling resolves and the tissues soften.

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- Tingling, itching, and numbness of the ear skin are all normal after Otoplasty (Ear Setback) surgery. Tingling and itching are signs of healing and will resolve. Sensation to the skin may return gradually and slowly over several weeks, though some areas may always have loss of or decreased sensation.
- Scars and tissues take one full year to mature. You may notice that they become red, raised and firm for several weeks to months before becoming soft, flat and pale. Avoid Vitamin E as it can irritate the skin and scars. Mederma has no proven benefit and is not worth the expense. All incisions will be sensitive to sunlight during the healing phase. Direct sun exposure or tanning booths are to be avoided. Silicone cream, such as Biocorneum Advanced Scar Treatment, or skin moisturizer with sunscreen and gentle massage may be helpful.
- Please call our office (617-492-0620) if you have:
  - Continuous bleeding
  - Significantly more pain or swelling on one ear when compared to the other
  - Fever, spreading redness, or irritation of the ears
  - Shortness of breath

It is important to be seen by Dr. Taylor or Dr. Sullivan after your operation. They will see you in follow-up appointments at 1 week, 3-6 months, and 1 year or as often as needed post-op. Call to schedule your appointments at Taylor & Sullivan Plastic Surgery office at (617) 492-0620 between the hours of 8:30 – 5:00 or visit our webpage at [www.massplasticsurgeons.com](http://www.massplasticsurgeons.com). We are always available for postoperative concerns or emergencies and can be reached through our paging service 24 hours per day at (617) 492-0620.

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