

# PINNAPLASTY CARE INSTRUCTIONS

RE PLASTIC SURGERY - MR. LOK HUEI YAP FRCS (PLASTIC SURGERY)

## BEFORE THE OPERATION

1. AVOID ASPIRIN OR ASPIRIN-CONTAINING MEDICATIONS for a period of 7-10 days before surgery, unless there is a strong medical reason for taking Aspirin. Aspirin makes the blood less effective at clotting and may increase bleeding and bruising, as do many other medications with names ending in '-phen' or '-fen'. Please review the enclosed list of medications that may contain aspirin. For mild to moderate pain, Paracetamol is preferred.
2. Stop smoking for at least six weeks before surgery, and ideally discontinue smoking permanently after surgery, as cigarette smoke contains substances including nicotine which act to reduce blood supply in tissues, increasing the risk of wound failure and skin death. Nicotine patches should also be discontinued.
3. Please report any sign of a cough, cold, boils or skin eruptions appearing within one week of surgery. For your own safety, if you have a cough or a cold, the operation will probably be postponed to avoid infective or airways complications.
4. Reduce your alcohol intake in the pre- and post-operative period, as alcohol can have an effect on blood vessels.
5. Most dietary supplements should be discontinued a month before surgery, particularly Vitamin E preparations which can cause increased bleeding and bruising. Vitamin C preparations can be taken after the operation and may help wound healing.
6. Arrange for someone to drive you home after surgery.

## THE NIGHT BEFORE YOUR OPERATION

1. NOTHING TO EAT OR DRINK AFTER MIDNIGHT.
2. Wash your hair as you will need to wear a head bandage for a week after surgery.
3. Wash your ears and the skin behind your ears for two minutes with antibacterial soap.

## THE DAY OF YOUR OPERATION

1. NOTHING TO EAT OR DRINK.
2. Do not take medications, herbal remedies, or supplements, unless they have been prescribed for you.
3. Wear loose-fitting, comfortable clothes that do not have to be pulled over your head.
4. Storage space will be provided for your personal effects, but do not bring valuables with you to the hospital.

## AFTER YOUR OPERATION

1. The ears will be padded with a layered inner dressing to help relieve pressure, and secured with an elasticated outer head dressing. The dressing should be snug but not too tight. This should be kept intact and dry until your first follow up visit.
2. Arrange for someone you can rely on, to drive you home and spend the first two days with you. Additional instructions and advice can be given to the person looking after you.
3. You will have some mild to moderate discomfort after the procedure and should take regular pain relieving medication (Paracetamol) for the first week after surgery. More significant pain can be managed with oral narcotic medications.
4. **DO NOT TAKE ASPIRIN, ASPIRIN-CONTAINING PRODUCTS OR OTHER ANTI-INFLAMMATORY MEDICATIONS** (e.g. Ibuprofen, Brufen, Nurofen, Alleve) for two weeks after surgery, as this may cause prolonged bleeding or additional bruising during the early post-operative period.
5. Make sure you have adequate rest for the first few days.
6. Do take your medications as prescribed, particularly your oral antibiotics unless you experience a gastrointestinal disturbance or skin rash. If you are constipated, do take some over-the-counter laxatives. Straining at stool should be avoided, as this may cause an increased risk of bleeding in the wounds.
7. Avoid sleeping on your ears for at least 3 weeks after surgery. Similarly, try to avoid any direct trauma to the ears after surgery. You should have been advised to obtain a wide, elastic sweat or head band to help support the ears for at least 6 weeks after surgery – you should sleep with this on to avoid accidental pulling of the ears during sleep.
8. Please call the Practice for a follow-up appointment approximately one week after surgery.
9. Avoid alcohol or cigarette smoking for at least 3 weeks after surgery.
10. Mr. Yap will assess your scar and the need for scar therapy. This will start at 2 – 3 weeks post-surgery, if needed, and you will be advised regarding the appropriate scar creams.
11. Do not expose your scars to direct sunlight for 12 months after surgery. Use sunblock with a minimum sun protection factor (SPF) of 15.
12. Gym activity or strenuous physical activity should be re-commenced not earlier than 4 weeks after surgery. This return to exercise should be gradual.
13. You should not drive for at least 2 weeks after surgery, and even then only if you are confident that you are capable of carrying out an emergency stop.
14. Your level of activity at work will influence when you return to work. Most patients will be able to return to work within 10 days if their job is not physically demanding. If you have a more physical occupation, you will require a longer recovery time, typically 2 - 3 weeks, before returning to work.

IF ONE OR MORE OF THE FOLLOWING OCCUR, PLEASE CALL THE PRACTICE IMMEDIATELY:

- a) Fresh bleeding from the wound, more than a simple ooze
- b) Rapid enlargement of one or other ear, associated with pain and bruising
- c) The head dressing feels excessively tight or loose
- d) Significant pain not relieved by simple painkillers
- e) Wound discharge after 48 – 72 hours
- f) Temperature greater than 38.5° C

### WHAT YOU CAN EXPECT

- 1. Your ears will be tender and swollen for the first 1 – 2 weeks after surgery.
- 2. The ears will usually be less sensitive to touch after surgery, although in some instances they may feel more sensitive than normal. Recovery of sensation in the ears may take weeks to months, and as this happens you may feel some tingling, 'electric shock' type sensations. This is part of normal recovery.
- 3. You will have a single continuous sutured tied over a non-adherent dressing under the head dressing. This will be removed usually at 7 days after the operation.
- 4. The scars will be healed by about two weeks after surgery but may remain raised, pink, sensitive or reddened for some months. Final settling and resolution of the scars may take up to 2 years.

**RE PLASTIC SURGERY**

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