



OTOPLASTY - Ear Pinning, Ear Reduction Surgery, Prominent Ear Surgery

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Most individuals seeking consultations for ear reconstruction have protruding ears (bat ears) or deformities of the ear folds, which often results in ridicule and cruel remarks from their peers. This in turn lowers their self-esteem and confidence. Otoplasty can be performed to place the ears back in a more natural position dramatically improving the aesthetic appearance. Patients can be treated as outpatients under general anaesthesia or under local anaesthesia combined with IV sedation. For children it is better to wait until they are at least 6 years old. An advantage in performing otoplasty in children is that the cartilage is still soft and easily moulded, as cartilage becomes firmer with age. However, otoplasty is still very effective in teenagers and adults. Correction of severe deformities of the ears is more complex and can be discussed on an individual basis.

Otoplasty can be performed to:

- Even up the size and shape of ears that do not match
- Pin back protruding ears
- Reduce excess cartilage in the ears

Understanding the procedure

In the majority of cases an incision is made near the fold of the ear where the ear joins the head and an elliptical or dumbbell of skin is removed. The cartilage is then sculpted creating a more natural looking shape and stitched into place, or alternatively, a portion of cartilage may be removed and the ear folded back to its new permanent position. Stitches along the incision line will be either dissolvable or removed in 7-10 days. The surgery lasts 1-2 hours. Patients are normally ready to go home after a few hours. Children must stay with a responsible adult for 24 hours if the child is discharged home on the same day.

Initial Consultation questions

- Am I a good candidate for this procedure?
- What is a realistic outcome for me after surgery?
- How long will the operation take?
- What is the recovery time?
- What are the risks involved?
- Is post-operative medication necessary?
- What is the charge for the procedure?

It is a good idea to write down the answers Dr Chow provides so that you can review these carefully later. The consultation also provides you with an opportunity to meet Dr Chow to determine whether your personality and hers are compatible and that you feel comfortable with her as your surgeon.

Medical History

It is important that you are candid with Dr Chow regarding your medical history so that she can plan the best possible treatment. This information is strictly confidential.

Please inform her of any:

- Previous facial and/or cosmetic surgery
- Past and current medical conditions such as heart, lung and kidney disease, prolonged bleeding or excessive bruising, blood clots in the legs or lungs, or gastric reflux
- Current medications especially Aspirin, Anti-inflammatories, Warfarin, blood thinners, Insulin, and oral contraceptive pills. Over the counter products such as vitamins and herbal medications may also be important.
- Allergies or adverse reactions to antibiotics, anaesthetic drugs or other medications
- Psychological and psychiatric illnesses
- Past keloid scarring or poor healing
- Connective tissue disorders such rheumatoid arthritis, lupus erythematosus, scleroderma or similar
- Previous radiotherapy to the head, neck or chest areas

Risks of Surgery

Modern surgery is safe but does have risks. Complications can occur despite the highest standards and world's best practice principles used by Dr Chow.

It is not possible to list all the risks but you should be informed of the common side effects and benefits so that you can make an informed consent. Dr Chow will discuss these in greater detail at consultation. You should write down any particular questions or specific concerns.

The potential risks are

General risk of surgery

- Wound infection – may require antibiotics
- Bleeding, blood clots or seroma
- Chest infection
- Sore throat from the breathing tube
- Scars that become raised (hypertrophic or keloid)

Specific Risks

- Asymmetry is common as no two ears are the same. Rarely this is gross. Occasionally minor revision surgery will be recommended.

- Re-protrusion may occur in 5% of cases.
- Reduced sensation around the ears is common but this is temporary and should return to normal in 6 months.
- Nausea and loss of balance is temporary.
- Skin necrosis is very uncommon.
- Telephone or reverse telephone deformity

MAKING A DECISION TO PROCEED WITH SURGERY

Whether your surgery is desired for functional or cosmetic reasons, your choice of a qualified facial plastic surgeon is of paramount importance. As a Facial Plastic Surgeon, Dr Chow is trained in both Otolaryngology Head & Neck Surgery and Facial surgery, which provides you, the patient, with the highest level of training and expertise. You should be informed as much as possible before making a decision to proceed with surgery. Cosmetic surgery is an elective procedure, which means that it is a personal choice and not necessary for maintenance of good health. You can expect a thorough explanation from Dr Chow regarding the various types of surgical procedures. Dr Chow will inform you of the best methods of anaesthesia, the surgical facility where your procedure will take place and the benefits and risks involved in surgery. Following a joint decision by you and Dr Chow to go ahead with a procedure, photographs of you will be taken and Dr Chow will further discuss the options available.

A good rapport between you and Dr Chow and realistic expectations are prerequisites for successful outcome. You are most likely to be pleased with the results if you have a realistic idea of what surgery can and cannot do. The goal is for a natural, aesthetically pleasing and balanced look.

Please do not hesitate to seek another doctor's opinion if you are uncertain about Dr Chow's advice. You are the most qualified person to select a surgeon that is right for you.

PREOPERATIVE (Before surgery) INSTRUCTIONS

- Please cease Aspirin, Aspirin-containing products, Plavix and non-steroidal anti-inflammatories (such as Ibuprofen) for 10 days prior to and two weeks following your surgery. If you are on any medications that affect bleeding (such as Warfarin, Xarelto or Rivaroxaban) please notify Dr Chow.
- Smoking tobacco and alcohol increase anaesthetic and surgical risks. Please cease them for one to two weeks prior to and three weeks following surgery. They cause delayed wound healing, skin redness and other complications.
- Please notify us of all your routine medications and significant health history. You can remain on your daily medications, except for blood thinners unless instructed otherwise.
- Arnica, a natural herb that significantly decreases bruising, can be taken before and after surgery along with Vitamin C (ascorbic acid), which helps promote healing.
- If you are having a morning procedure you must not eat or drink after midnight the evening before. If you are having an afternoon procedure you must not eat or

drink after 6.00am on the morning of surgery. You may, however, take your normal medications and brush your teeth.

- Please shower and remove any make-up and nail polish before arriving for your procedure.
- Unless you are remaining in hospital someone will need to drive you home after surgery and stay with you that evening.
- If you have any concerns please call the office. Remember, we are all here to give you the best possible care.

POSTOPERATIVE (After Surgery) INSTRUCTIONS

Dr Chow will apply sterile dressings and bandages. These will be removed after 2-5 days. She will also apply an ointment to prevent dryness of the area. There will be some degree of swelling and bruising. Head elevation will help to reduce this. It is not uncommon to have unevenness in the ears in the first few days but this normally resolves after a few days. Once the dressings and bandages have been removed it is important to continue applying the ointment to the wounds on a regular basis (at least 4 times per day) because sutures that have been kept well lubricated are easier to remove. Hair can be washed on the second day but it is important to dry sutures thoroughly afterwards.

It takes times for any swelling and bruising to subside. Most adults can return to work after 5 days and children after 7 days. Children should be careful in the playground and avoid sporting activities for up to 6 weeks. Please avoid wearing earrings until several weeks after surgery and protect your face from the sun by wearing a hat and sunglasses. A soft elastic headband should be worn everyday for 2 weeks post operation continuously then at night for 4 to 6 weeks.

Final results following Otoplasty are not fully apparent for 3 to 6 months following surgery. We recommend that you have follow up appointments for assessment and postoperative photographs.

Medications: Dr Chow will prescribe pain relief to be used as directed. Usually Paracetamol +/- Codeine (Painstop for children) is sufficient. Most patients complain of discomfort rather than pain. Do not take additional pain relievers other than what Dr Chow suggests or prescribes and start any antibiotics when you get home.

Please Inform Dr Chow's office or the hospital where the procedure was performed if you have the following:

- High fever, chills or a temperature of more than 38 degrees
- Heavy bleeding from the wound
- Severe pain or tenderness
- Significant redness, or discharge around the incision
- Significant swelling

If you have any concerns please contact Dr Chow's office. Remember, we are all here to give you the best possible care.