

A Myringoplasty is an operation to close a hole in an eardrum (a perforation). Perforations can be caused by middle ear infections, past ear surgery or trauma, and can lead to symptoms of infection (pain and discharge) as well as hearing loss. It must be emphasised that the operation is designed to prevent further infections and not improve hearing.

A Myringoplasty is performed under a general anaesthetic and takes approximately one hour. An incision is made in front or, more commonly, behind the ear in which case some hair may have to be shaved away from the incision. Some tissue is taken from behind the ear and is used as a graft, which is laid under the hole. The ear canal is packed with a dressing and the incision is closed with sutures. You will wake up with a large bandage around your head.

Risks

Myringoplasty is a commonly performed operation, however there are some risks that you should be aware of. There is a 90% chance of a successful operation if the ear is free of infection. After the operation, occasionally some people are temporarily dizzy, experience buzzing in their ear, or complain of a metallic taste in their mouth, as the taste nerve running through the ear can be stretched. Rarely there can be bruising of the nerve that supplies the face, causing temporary, rarely permanent, weakness of the face.

Before the operation

Keep the ear dry to prevent infection. If your ear discharges, you should see your doctor to get some eardrops.

After the operation

As you can be temporarily dizzy after the operation, you will stay in hospital overnight. If everything is satisfactory you will be discharged after the ward round. Sutures will be removed by your GP practice nurse one week after the operation. You will be seen in the ENT outpatient clinic in two to six weeks time to remove the ear pack; you must keep the ear completely dry until this time. The best way to do this is to use cotton wool, smeared with Vaseline to plug the outer ear when you wash your hair. This is important, as the most common cause of a failed operation is an infection caused by getting the ear wet. Avoid flying or blowing your nose hard, for at least six weeks.

It is recommended that you take at least two weeks off work.

Further advice

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact the nursing staff in ENT clinic at Bedford Hospital on 01234 355122 ext. 4204.

ENT

Myringoplasty



An information leaflet for patients.

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