

Mastoidectomy

How to prepare and what to expect

This handout describes what to expect when having mastoid surgery, how to prepare for your operation, and how to plan for your recovery.

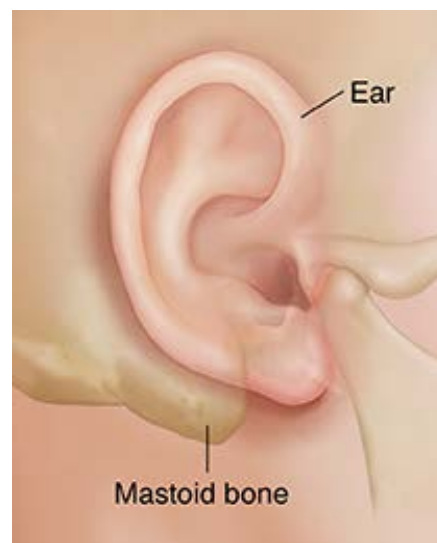
What is a mastoidectomy?

The *mastoid* bone is at the base of the skull, right behind the ear. A *mastoidectomy* is surgery to remove part of this bone.

This surgery may be done when the ear is infected, but the infection has not gone away after being treated with antibiotics. Your surgeon will remove the infected tissue.

How do I prepare?

- For 2 weeks before your surgery, do **not** take any aspirin or other products that affect blood clotting. Two of these are ibuprofen (Advil, Motrin, and others) and naproxen (Aleve, Naprosyn, and others).
- You will go home the same day as your surgery. You must arrange for a responsible adult to give you a ride home. You **cannot** drive yourself, take a taxi, or ride a bus home.



The mastoid bone is right behind and under the ear.

What to Expect After Surgery

For Your Safety

For 24 hours after surgery, do not:

- Drive a vehicle or travel alone
- Use machinery
- Drink alcohol
- Sign any legal papers or make important decisions
- Be responsible for the care of another person

Dressing

- Keep the dressing (bandages) in place for **1 week**.
- You may adjust the strap if the dressing is uncomfortable.
- If the outside of the dressing becomes bloodstained, you may return to clinic for a dressing change.
- **Do NOT take any packing out of your ear.** Your doctor will remove the packing at your next clinic visit.
- Keep your ear dry until your doctor says you can get it wet.

Pain Medicine

Most people have very little pain after this surgery. You will be given pain medicine to take by mouth as needed.

Eating

- You can usually eat and drink in the evening on the day of your surgery.
- You may have an upset stomach from the *anesthesia* (the medicine you were given to make you sleep during surgery).

Activity

- Do **not** blow your nose for 3 weeks. If you need to get mucous out of your nose, sniff it back and then spit it out.
- If you sneeze, keep your mouth open. Do **not** hold your nose. This will blow air into your ear.

Return to Work

Most people can return to work 3 days after surgery. Your return to work may depend on what kind of work you do. Ask your surgeon if you have any questions about when you can safely go back to work.

Follow-up Visits

You will have:

- **A follow-up visit 1 week after surgery** to remove the *outer* packing from your ear.

Your 1st follow-up appointment is:

Date: _____ Time: _____

- **A 2nd follow-up visit 2 weeks after surgery** to remove the *inner* packing from your ear.
- **A hearing test 4 to 6 weeks after your surgery.**

When to Call

Call the clinic nurse or doctor on call if you have:

- Bleeding from your ear
- Fever higher than 100°F (37.8°C)
- Increased redness, swelling, pain, or drainage from your ear
- Nausea or vomiting that will not stop

Questions?

Your questions are important. Call your doctor or healthcare provider if you have questions or concerns.

Weekdays from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., call the Nurse's Voice Mail Line, 206.598.7519. We will return your call as soon as we are able.

After hours and on weekends and holidays, call 206.598.4022. You will be directed to the Community Care Line Nurse.