

Information for patients

Mastoidectomy, stapedectomy, myringoplasty and tympanoplasty

What is a mastoidectomy?

A mastoidectomy is the removal of the mastoid bone (the bony prominence at the base of the skull that you can feel just behind your ear).

What is a stapedectomy?

A stapedectomy is the removal of the stapes bone within the middle ear to reduce hearing loss.

What is a myringoplasty?

A myringoplasty is a repair of the ear drum (tympanic membrane) to relieve pressure or infection that is causing hearing loss following perforation of the membrane.

What is a tympanoplasty?

A tympanoplasty is a procedure to reconstruct the ear drum (tympanic membrane) and/or middle ear bone as the result of infection or trauma.

What happens before my surgery?

Before surgery, some patients attend a pre-admission clinic where the doctor will explain the surgery and you will sign a consent form.

At the clinic, the health care team will ask you about your health, medication and lifestyle. They may test your blood, take x-rays and an electrocardiogram (ECG).

Your doctor will talk to you about what medications to take before you come to hospital.

It is important to tell your doctor if you are taking any blood thinning medications, such as aspirin, warfarin or clopidogrel (Plavix).

Please bring your medications into hospital with you.

If you use a dosette box or pill organiser to take your tablets, please ask your pharmacist to print out a list of your current medications so you can bring this to hospital.

If you do not need to attend the pre-admission clinic, we will telephone you to tell you when your

surgery is scheduled and what to bring to hospital. You may also receive a letter informing you of your time and date of surgery. Please make sure you confirm your date for surgery.

The day before your surgery, the hospital will call you between 2.30pm and 7pm to inform you of the time you need to stop eating and drinking and what time to come to hospital.

What will happen on the day of my surgery?

We ask that you shower before you come to hospital and remove jewellery, make up, nail polish and fake nails. It is advised that you leave valuables such as jewellery and large sums of money at home to decrease the possibility of items being misplaced or stolen.

On the day of your surgery, please make your way to the St Vincent's Day of Surgery Admission (DOSA) area, which is located on the first floor of the In-patient Services Building, Princes Street, Fitzroy.

When you arrive the nursing staff will check your pulse and blood pressure.

You will need an anaesthetic for your surgery. The anaesthetist (the doctor who will give you the anaesthetic) will meet with you before your surgery to talk to you about your health and the best anaesthetic for you.

A general anaesthetic (anaesthetic that puts you to sleep) is normally used for this surgery.

St Vincent's is a busy hospital so please be aware that you may need to wait up to three hours for your operation.

What happens during the surgery?

Each of the following operations normally take approximately one hour.

Mastoidectomy

A surgical cut (incision) is made behind the ear. The mastoid bone is then exposed and opened with a surgical drill. The infection or growth is removed and the incision is closed using stitches under the skin. A small dressing is then placed over the area.

Stapedectomy

Using a special microscope into the ear canal, the ear drum is gently lifted so the diseased stapes bone can be removed. The ear drum is gently put back and held in place by absorbable packing ointment.

Myringoplasty and tympanoplasty

The surgery is either performed through the ear canal or through the skin at the back of the ear. The hole in your ear drum or middle ear bone is mended using a graft taken from your own tissue around the ear,

A dressing called a wick is left inside the ear canal and is usually removed after a few days.

What happens after the surgery?

You will wake up from the anaesthetic in the recovery room and be transferred to your ward shortly after. A nurse will monitor your blood pressure, pulse, temperature and oxygen levels regularly.

The nurses will monitor your ear wounds after surgery to make sure there is no bleeding.

You may have an oxygen mask to help you breathe and an intravenous (IV) drip in your arm giving you fluid until you are able to eat and drink. You will not be permitted to eat and drink until four hours after surgery. This is because you may feel sick or vomit.

Your pain may be treated in a number of ways. This will be decided by you, your doctors and nurses depending on the type of pain you have. You may be given tablets or an injection to help you feel better.

It is important not to blow your nose and not to get the ear wet until it has completely healed.

When can I go home?

You will be required to stay in hospital for one night and will be able to go home the morning after your operation. Patients are usually discharged at 10am so the room can be prepared for another patient.

Before you leave the ward someone will:

- make a follow-up appointment at St Vincent's Specialist Clinics for you
- send a letter from the hospital to your local doctor (GP)
- give you medication, if the doctor prescribes it
- give you a medical certificate if needed (you will need to ask).

Please remember to take all your belongings including x-rays home with you.

What should I do once I get home?

Your doctor may recommend one week off work after the operation to give your body the best chance of recovery.

You should avoid doing any strenuous activity, especially lifting anything heavy. Do not lift anything more than 2-3kg for two weeks after surgery (this equals the weight of a bag of oranges).

Get plenty of rest as you may feel tired after your hospital stay. You will be able to get dressed independently and should slowly increase your level of activity each day.

Smoking is not recommended.

If you notice discharge, swelling, hardness or redness on or around your wound or if you experience any other problems related to your surgery go to the nearest emergency department or your local GP as soon as possible.

Contacts

Liaison Nurse

Tel: 9288 2755

Waiting List Officer

Tel: 9288 2271

This information is intended as a guideline only. If you have further questions or concerns, please speak to your doctor.