

Frequently Asked Questions

Otoplasty FAQs

Q: What is otoplasty?

A: Otoplasty is a surgical procedure which minimizes the appearance of protruding ears by setting them back to a more natural position.

Q: Who is the best candidate for otoplasty?

A: The best candidate for otoplasty is a physically healthy individual with realistic expectations who is looking to minimize the appearance of large, protruding ears. This procedure may be performed on children six years of age or older as well as on adults.

Q: Are there any age restrictions when it comes to otoplasty?

A: Children should be six years of age or older as the ears are mostly grown by this time. It's often recommended that the procedure be performed at a young age, as opposed to waiting until adulthood, to spare children any teasing or ridicule that they may suffer as a result of their ears.

Q: Where is otoplasty performed?

A: Otoplasty may take place in a surgeon's office-based facility, an outpatient surgical center or a hospital.

Q: What type of anesthesia is used for otoplasty?

A: General anesthesia is typically used for young children undergoing otoplasty, while local anesthesia combined with sedation is often used for older children and adults.

Q: How long does the actual otoplasty procedure last?

A: Otoplasty usually requires 1.5-2 hours to complete.

Q: Where are the incisions made for otoplasty?

A: The incisions for otoplasty are hidden behind the ears.

Q: Will there be scars after otoplasty?

A: Because the incisions for otoplasty are well-hidden behind the ears, the resulting scars are well concealed.

Q: Is there much pain with otoplasty?

A: Patients may experience some aching or throbbing of the ears for the first few days after otoplasty, though pain medication can be prescribed to control any discomfort that you experience.

Q: What is the recovery like after otoplasty?

A: There is typically little discomfort and not too much downtime associated with otoplasty. Some throbbing or aching of the ears can occur, though most patients are up and about within a few hours of their surgery. The head will likely be wrapped in a bandage, and the stitches will be removed or dissolve on their own in about a week.

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: How much time will I need to take off from work or school after otoplasty?

A: Most children can resume a fairly normal schedule within a week after otoplasty while adults can usually return to work within a few days. However, more strenuous activities and any activity which risks injury to the ear should be avoided for one to two months.

Q: When can I exercise after otoplasty?

A: Strenuous activities, contact sports, and any activity risking injury to the ear should be avoided for at least one to two months.

Q: When are the stitches removed after otoplasty?

A: After otoplasty, the stitches are usually removed or dissolve on their own in about a week.

Q: Are there any risks or complications with otoplasty?

A: As with all types of surgery there are potential complications associated with otoplasty and these may include blood clot, excessive scarring, infection, mismatched or artificial-looking ears, and recurrence of the protrusion.

Q: Does insurance ever cover the cost of otoplasty?

A: Procedures performed solely for cosmetic purposes are typically not covered by insurance, though some amount of coverage may be available for the repair of abnormal body structure. Patients should check with their own insurance company about the availability of coverage.

Q: Is it possible to get the otoplasty procedure financed?

A: Financing is available for many plastic surgery procedures and your surgeon should be able to provide you with more information.

Q: Is only one ear treated if only one is protruding?

A: To achieve the best balance, otoplasty is typically performed on both ears even if only one ear is protruding.