

# Myringoplasty

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This fact sheet is for general information about this procedure only. It is not intended to be used as medical advice or to replace advice that your relevant healthcare professional would give you. If you have a particular medical problem, please consult a healthcare professional.

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## What is a myringoplasty?

A myringoplasty is an operation to repair a hole in your eardrum.

A perforation is usually caused by an infection in your middle ear that bursts through your eardrum. It can also be caused by trauma (for example, being hit across your ear or by placing an object in your ear).

Often a perforated eardrum does not cause any problems but it can lead to repeated ear infections and poorer hearing.

## What are the benefits of surgery?

You should have less risk of repeated ear infections and your hearing may improve.

## Are there any alternatives to surgery?

Keeping your ear dry by placing cotton wool and Vaseline in your ear when bathing or washing your hair may prevent infection.

An infection can be treated with antibiotics and a trained healthcare practitioner can clean your ear.

A hearing aid can improve poor hearing but can also lead to more infections.

## What will happen if I decide not to have the operation or the operation is delayed?

Ear infections may continue and will cause your hearing to get worse.

Infection can spread either to the bone behind your ear, causing mastoiditis (risk: 7 in 10,000), or to your brain, causing meningitis or a brain abscess (risk: 1 in 10,000).

Contact your healthcare team if you experience:

- Dizziness.
- Discharge from the affected ear.

## What does the operation involve?

The operation is usually performed under a general anaesthetic but a local anaesthetic can be used. The operation usually takes an hour to 90 minutes.

Your surgeon will need to use a graft (piece of tissue) to cover the hole.

Your surgeon will place the graft through a cut made either in front of or behind your ear, or inside your ear canal. They will usually lift your eardrum, place the graft underneath and support it with a dissolving sponge. They will put your eardrum back.

## How can I prepare myself for the operation?

If you smoke, stopping smoking now may reduce your risk of developing complications and will improve your long-term health.

Try to maintain a healthy weight. You have a higher risk of developing complications if you are overweight.

Regular exercise should help to prepare you for the operation, help you to recover and improve your long-term health. Before you start exercising, ask the healthcare team or your GP for advice.

Speak to the healthcare team about any vaccinations you might need to reduce your risk of serious illness while you recover. When you come into hospital, practise social distancing and hand washing and wear a face covering when asked.

## What complications can happen?

Some complications can be serious and can even cause death.

### General complications of any operation

- Bleeding
- Infection of the surgical site (wound)
- Allergic reaction to the equipment, materials or medication
- Blood clot in your leg
- Blood clot in your lung
- Chest infection

### Specific complications of this operation

- Failure of the graft
- Numbness of your ear

- Loss of hearing
- Tinnitus (ringing in your ear)
- Change of taste
- Allergic reaction to the pack material

## Consequences of this procedure

- Pain
- Unsightly scarring of your skin

## How soon will I recover?

If a head bandage has been used, it will usually be removed after 3 to 4 hours.

You should be able to go home that day.

You should be able to return to work after about 2 weeks.

Protect your ear from water using cotton wool and Vaseline, and do not swim until your surgeon has told you that the graft has worked.

Regular exercise should help you to return to normal activities as soon as possible. Before you start exercising, ask the healthcare team or your GP for advice.

Most people make a good recovery. You will need to come back after 2 to 3 weeks to have the pack removed and to check the graft.

## Summary

A myringoplasty can prevent infections and sometimes improve your hearing.

Keep this information document. Use it to help you if you need to talk to the healthcare team.

Some information, such as risk and complication statistics, is taken from global studies and/or databases. Please ask your surgeon or doctor for more information about the risks that are specific to you, and they may be able to tell you about any other suitable treatments options.

This document is intended for information purposes only and should not replace advice that your relevant healthcare team would give you.

## Acknowledgements

### Reviewer

Matthew Campbell (MBBS, FRACS)

### Illustrator

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