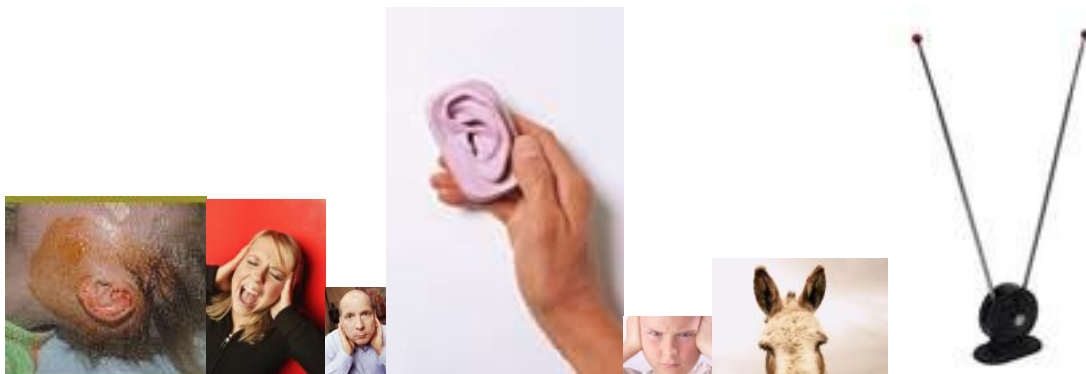


Ear Surgery (Otoplasty)



Description: Reduces the size of large ears or sets prominent ears back closer to the head. Ear surgery is commonly done on children between ages 4 and 14 years old (occasionally covered by insurance).

Length: 2 to 3 hours.

Side Effects: Temporary throbbing, aching, swelling, redness and numbness (patients are advised not to sleep on their sides in order to reduce ear pressure).

Recovery:

Back to work or school: 5 to 7 days. Strenuous activity and contact sports: 1 to 2 months.

Risks: Infection of cartilage, excess scarring, blood clots. Mismatched or artificial-looking ears. Repeat surgery to correct recurrence of protrusion.

Results: Usually permanent.

Technology: The type of incisions used for ear surgery will depend on the problem, and even when only one ear appears to protrude, surgery is usually performed on both ears for a better balance. For one of the common techniques, a surgeon makes a small incision in the back of the ear to expose cartilage, then sculpts the cartilage, bending it back toward the head; occasionally removing a larger piece of cartilage to provide a more natural-looking fold. Another technique involves a similar incision in the back of the ear, skin removal, and stitches used to fold the cartilage back on itself to reshape the ear without removing cartilage.

Patient Status: Outpatient

Anesthesia: General