

When can I resume normal activities?

- You will need approximately two weeks off work following your operation.
- You should avoid swimming.
- You should not fly until after your follow-up appointment two to three weeks after your operation, and then only with your doctor's approval.

When will I notice any improvement?

As packing is placed in your ear at the time of surgery, you will not notice any hearing improvement until after this is removed at your follow-up appointment. This usually takes place after two weeks. It may take a little longer to feel the full benefits.

Further information

If you need any further information, or have any problems you are welcome to contact Wheal Coates ward on: 01872 253830 / 253832

If you would like this leaflet in large print, braille, audio version or in another language, please contact the Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) on 01872 252793



Otosclerosis and stapedectomy



What is otosclerosis?

This is an abnormal growth (benign, not cancerous) in your middle ear, which leads to the bones in your middle ear becoming fixed. These bones must move freely for your ear to work properly and hear well.

What causes it?

Around 60% of cases are genetic (it tends to run in families) and it is estimated up to 10% of the adult population is affected.

What are the symptoms?

The main symptom is slowly progressing hearing loss, which usually starts in your 20s. Other symptoms may include dizziness, or a sensation of ringing or hissing in your ears or head known as tinnitus.

How is it diagnosed?

It is important to see an ear, nose and throat doctor as many of the symptoms can be caused by other medical conditions. The doctor will examine you and you will need to have a hearing test before they make a diagnosis.

How is it treated?

If your hearing loss is mild the doctor may suggest a wait and watch policy. In most cases, hearing loss will progress over time and then surgery (known as a stapedectomy) is an effective treatment.

Are there any alternatives to surgery?

You could wear a hearing aid.

What if I don't have treatment?

Your hearing may stay the same, or it may get worse.

What is a stapedectomy?

A stapedectomy is an operation to remove the otosclerosis and any of the bones in your middle ear that the otosclerosis has grown around. It is performed under a general anaesthetic (while you are completely asleep), through your ear canal. Sometimes your surgeon will need to make a further

cut at the front of your ear; they will discuss this with you in the outpatient department. The bones that have been removed are replaced with a prosthetic (artificial) device which allows your remaining bones to move again and transmit sound.

How long will it take?

The operation takes about an hour.

What are the benefits of a stapedectomy?

Your hearing will improve as the bones in your middle ear will be able to transmit sound again.

How long will I need to stay in hospital?

You will usually be able to go home the day after your operation.

What happens afterwards?

You may experience dizziness for a day or two, and you will be encouraged to lie quietly with your operated ear uppermost. Your taste sensation may be affected but will usually return to normal.

You may be asked not to blow your nose.

What are the possible risks?

- Your hearing may not improve or may become worse.
- Tinnitus (buzzing or ringing in your ear) may occur.
- You may experience giddiness or dizziness, usually short-term.
- Rarely, your facial nerve may be damaged.

Are there any possible complications?

Please inform the ward staff immediately if you develop any of these:

- sudden hearing loss
- intense pain
- prolonged or intense dizziness.