

My Planned Care Patient Information Platform

ENT - Ear Drum Repair

Introduction

A perforated or burst eardrum is a hole in the eardrum. If the hole in your eardrum is big, or has not healed in a few weeks, your GP will refer you to an ear specialist for surgery on ear drum repair.

The Covid pandemic has had a significant impact on the NHS ability to provide routine elective services. We recognise that patients are waiting longer than we would all like and it is not always possible to identify when treatment will take place. This document provides you with information on how you can support yourself while waiting to attend the hospital.

Guidance for Patients

Whilst awaiting ear drum repair surgery you may experience intermittent and or recurrent infections with discharge coming out of the ear.

Should these infections persist more than 3-4 days you should arrange an appointment with your GP who will be able to prescribe a course of topical antibiotic ear drops:

- Ciprofloxacin (Ciloxan) 0.3%, two drops twice a day for two weeks

Pain relief medications such as over the counter paracetamol and ibuprofen can be used.

To help reduce the risk of having an ear infection whilst the hole remains:

- avoid water or shampoo getting into your ears when you have a shower or bath by using ear moulds or cotton wool with Vaseline over the top
- use ear plugs or a swimming hat over your ears when you swim
- avoid cotton buds in ear canals or scratching of the ears

Would you consider the opportunity to have your surgery at another local hospital at an earlier date?

Whilst awaiting surgery at the hospital you were originally seen, there may be an opportunity to have your surgery at an earlier date at another Hospital in North East London under the care of another ENT Consultant surgeon. If you would like to go ahead with this option, please let the bookings team know so that they can make the alternative arrangements.

Change in symptoms

If your symptoms change or get worse whilst you are waiting for your appointment or procedure, you should contact your GP or [NHS 111](#) for advice.

How to prepare

There are many steps you can take to better prepare for your procedure:

- **Stop smoking** to improve your body's ability to heal and to improve your lung function. Guidance on the support available to help you stop smoking [can be found on the NICE website](#).
- **Exercise more and eat a healthy diet** to help your body manage the demands of surgery and aid recovery. For tips on helping you to start healthier eating habits, be more active and start losing weight, [download the free NHS Weight Loss Plan](#).
- **Reduce your alcohol intake**. Ensure you are drinking within (or preferably below) the recommended limits. This will improve your ability to heal after surgery.
- **Take care of your mental health** by preparing yourself for your procedure and recovery, to help reduce anxiety and stress.

Links to further information on living well and being better prepared for your surgery are available [here](#):

- ENT UK is the professional body representing Ear, Nose and Throat surgery. Their website has patient information on a range of common ENT Conditions and Procedures.
<http://www.entuk.org/>
- The Royal College of Anaesthetics has developed a set of 'Fitter Better Sooner' resources that will provide you with the information you need to become fitter and better prepared for your operation. [Royal College of Anaesthetics](#)
- The NHS live well web page, which provides general advice, tips and tools on health and wellbeing.
<https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/>