



Otoplasty
(Ear Reshaping)

Aesthetic Surgery Ireland

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Otoplasty

Clinic Ethos

Aesthetic Surgery Ireland is committed to providing patients with the greatest opportunity for achieving optimum clinical outcomes and receiving comprehensive and continuous care through the application of Art, Science and Integrity

Art

Performing the art of cosmetic surgery revolves around a surgeon's skills and aesthetic finesse, combined with a feeling for form and harmony. Training and knowledge of both reconstructive and cosmetic plastic surgery is an essential foundation for developing effective aesthetic surgical skills.

Science

The science of cosmetic surgery involves a comprehensive knowledge of surgical techniques and medical devices, and a clear understanding of what can be achieved for each patient. Only a Consultant Plastic Surgeon is equipped with this extensive knowledge of surgical and non-surgical techniques for cosmetic surgery.

Integrity

At the centre of a surgeon-patient relationship is a commitment by Aesthetic Surgery Ireland to treat each patient with the utmost integrity.

At the heart of our integrity are the following core principles:

1. Consultant Plastic Surgeons are on the Specialist Register of Plastic Surgery of the Irish Medical Council and reside in Ireland
2. Patients are treated with honesty, empathy and transparency at all times
3. Patients are offered comprehensive and balanced procedure information
4. Patients are afforded freedom of choice without undue influence
5. Clinically proven devices and equipment are used to support aesthetic outcomes
6. Comprehensive and continuous care is provided by Consultant Plastic Surgeons and appropriately qualified, highly experienced Nurses
7. Patient privacy and confidentiality is respected at all times
8. Clinical outcomes and patient care are of paramount importance
9. All surgical procedures are performed only in major Dublin hospitals.

Cosmetic surgery can offer powerful benefits to patients by improving their aesthetic appearance and increasing their self esteem. In order to optimise their individual outcomes, patients have a right to expect the highest ethical and clinical standards.

A guide to choosing the right surgeon

When considering plastic surgery in Ireland, a good choice is a member of the Irish Association of Plastic Surgeons (IAPS).

Members of the Irish Association of Plastic Surgeons

- Are certified by The Royal College of Surgeons of Ireland
- Complete a combination of at least two years of general surgery with a minimum of six years of plastic surgery training.
- Operate only in accredited medical facilities.
- Adhere to a strict code of ethics.
- Fulfil continuing medical education requirements, including standards and innovations in patient safety.
- Are on the Specialist Register of Plastic Surgery of the Irish Medical Council.

Our Consultant Plastic Surgeons are fully trained in Plastic, Reconstructive and Aesthetic plastic surgery. They are all listed on the Specialist Register of Plastic Surgeons of the Irish Medical Council, and in possession of a Certificate of Completion of Training. They are all members of the Irish Association of Plastic Surgeons, and most are members of the British Association of Plastic and Reconstructive Surgeons. It is also very important that you choose a Plastic Surgeon who is resident in Ireland and who can therefore provide comprehensive and continuous patient care, especially after your operation.

Overview

Excessively large or protruding ears can have quite serious social implications for those with this particular condition. People with prominent ears are sometimes teased, especially during their formative school years, which can contribute to a loss of self confidence.

A small percentage of the population considers their ears to be too large or prominent. In many cases the shape and lie of the ears is inherited. The most prominent ears often lack a normal fold, and sometimes one ear is more prominent than the other.

It is advisable that you first discuss this procedure with your General Practitioner (GP), who may then refer you to the Consultant Plastic Surgeon of your choice. Sharing your expectations with your GP and surgeon is the best way to increase the possibility of achieving your desired outcomes.

Otoplasty is a procedure used to reduce large or protruding ears by setting the ears back closer to the head as well as molding, shaping and/or removing cartilage. The operation can be conducted on patients once the ears have reached, or nearly reached, their full size which typically is around 5-6 years of age or older.

Ear surgery can dramatically change a person's appearance simply by making protruding ears look more normal. Often the problem is caused by an undeveloped middle fold of the ear. There may be other deformities as well, making it necessary to perform several procedures on the ear at the same time. Otoplasty can reshape the ears, reduce their size, make them more symmetrical, and/or position them closer to the head.

General prerequisites for surgery

Some of the prerequisites for an 'ideal' candidate for otoplasty surgery include patients:

- Whose ears have reached their full size.
- Who are in general good health.
- Who have no history of scarring problems, such as keloids.
- Who want to improve appearance.
- Who have realistic expectations.
- Who understand the limitations on activities required for good healing.
- Who are able and willing to carefully follow the surgeon's post-operative advice.

Please note that it is important to be aware that the above list is only an indication of general pre-requisites for suitable patients for this procedure. Ultimately it is the responsibility of the Consultant Plastic Surgeon to determine the suitability of each candidate.

Alternative options to surgery

The alternative options for patients to consider before undergoing otoplasty operations include:

- Accepting the protruding shape of the ears.
- Wearing a headband
- Camouflaging the protruding ears with long hair where possible.

Otoplasty



What happens before the operation

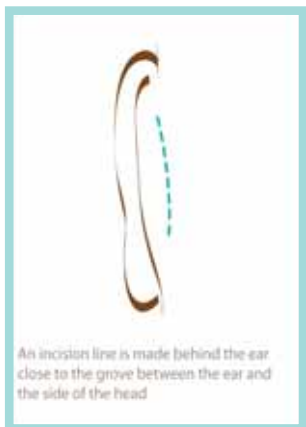
During the consultation, you and your Consultant Plastic Surgeon will discuss the changes that you would like to make in your appearance. It is very important that the surgeon is aware of your expectations for the outcome for this operation. Your surgeon will explain the different options available to you, the procedure itself, and its potential complications, risks and limitations. Your surgeon will also explain the type of anaesthesia required.

Your surgeon will ask for a complete medical history and examine the structure of both ears. Even if only one ear needs correction, surgery may still be recommended on both ears to achieve the most natural, symmetrical appearance.

What happens during the operation?

Pinnaplasty or Otoplasty is an operation which adjusts the shape of the cartilage within the ear to create the missing folds and to allow the ear to lie closer to the side of the head. Because the operation is carried out from behind the ears, a small scar is left close to the groove between the ear and the side of the head. Where the lobe of the ear is especially large, a small procedure to reduce its size may also be required.

This procedure generally involves reforming the cartilages that shape the ears, to pull them in, and reduce the protrusion. Sutures (stitches) may be placed in the cartilage on the back side of the ear to maintain the new position. Incisions and the resulting scars are well concealed on the back of the ear, so that there is no visible scarring.



The first surgical action is to prepare an incision just behind the ear; in the natural fold where the ear is joined to the head. The surgeon will then remove the necessary amounts of cartilage and skin required to achieve the right effect. In some cases, the surgeon will trim the cartilage, shaping it into a more desirable form and then pin the cartilage back with permanent sutures to secure the cartilage. In other instances, the surgeon will not remove any cartilage at all, using stitches to hold the cartilage in place.

An otoplasty operation generally takes about one to two hours. The length of the procedure depends on the surgical technique used and the amount of correction required.

The procedure will be performed in a hospital and the surgeon will advise you when you can return home but this operation usually requires an overnight stay.

Local or general anaesthesia maybe used for this procedure. It is the responsibility of your anaesthetist to fully explain the type of anaesthesia and any associated potential complications or risks.

Otoplasty



What happens after the operation?

Most surgeons advise patients to wear a headband for a few weeks after surgery in order to protect the surgical site. If you can wear this headband at work, then you can probably return to work quickly, but you will need to discuss this issue with your surgeon.

The hair can be washed after the dressing and the stitches have been removed. It is important to keep the grooves behind the ears clean.

Most normal activities can be resumed within a few weeks, but you will need to be very careful to protect your ears for at least 6 weeks, or possibly even longer. In order to make sure that there is no infection or bleeding in the ear after the surgery, you must be very careful to protect the ears and keep them clean. In addition, bending the ears forward in the first few months after the surgery can destroy even the finest surgical result, so be very careful to follow all of your surgeon's instructions.

The results are usually permanent, although there is always some small amount of "springing back" of the ears due to the elastic recoil nature of the ear cartilage.

Your hearing will not be affected by this operation: only the outer ear is operated on, not the middle or inner ear, where hearing takes place.

Will there be a scar?

The scars are hidden behind the ear and hence are not easily visible. However, if you are prone to scarring problems such as keloids, you should discuss this with your surgeon before the procedure.

What are some of the potential complications?

- Bleeding
- Haematoma (clotted blood under the skin)
- Infection
- Blistering
- Scarring on the front of the ear
- Cartilage deformity
- Keloid scars (1% of cases)
- Asymmetry
- Need for corrective re-generation

All surgery carries some risk of scarring, bleeding, reaction to anaesthesia and infection. Special care should be taken because infection or collection of blood under the skin can deform the ear cartilage.

A second procedure is rarely necessary although can sometimes be required. Occasionally one of the non-dissolving sutures (stitches) left in the ear will work its way to the surface and will have to be removed. Serious complications are quite rare. The ears are often a little numb after the procedure, and this usually takes several weeks to settle.

Please note: that with all procedures there is a possibility of patient dissatisfaction with the outcome.

For additional information regarding this operation please contact your Consultant Plastic Surgeon.

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Allergic reaction to anaesthetic

In very rare cases anaesthetics can cause allergic reactions. The best current estimate is that a life-threatening allergic reaction (also known as anaphylaxis) happens during one in 10,000 to one in 20,000 anaesthetics. Your anaesthetist will choose the drugs for your anaesthetic by taking into account many different factors, in particular; the type of operation, your physical condition, and whether you are allergic to anything.

Most people make a full recovery from anaphylaxis. It isn't known how many anaphylactic reactions during anaesthesia lead to death or permanent disability. One review article suggests that one in 20 serious reactions can lead to death. This in effect implies that the chance of dying as a result of an anaphylactic reaction during anaesthesia is between one in 200,000 and one in 400,000 anaesthetic procedures.

For additional information regarding this procedure please consult with your Consultant Plastic Surgeon.

Additional patient rights

(a) Informed consent

Patients are entitled to receive, and Aesthetic Surgery Ireland shall at all times strive to provide, comprehensive, accurate and balanced information regarding all clinical treatments, surgical procedures and patient care. Informed consent from competent patients to progress with the procedure is a fundamental requirement for Aesthetic Surgery Ireland. Patients will be asked, without any undue influence, to confirm their agreement to proceed with the procedure by signing a Patient Consent Form.

(b) Patient photographs

As a normal part of the clinical process and to assist the surgeon with patient care, photographs of the patient are taken both before and after the respective procedure or treatment. To advance medical understanding occasionally Aesthetic Surgery Ireland may ask patients for their written consent to use their photographs in medical presentations and research. When used for this purpose the patient's identity shall be protected and kept confidential at all times. Only photographs of patients who have provided written consent expressly for this purpose, shall be used.

(c) Minimum age


The minimum age for cosmetic clinical treatments and surgical procedures is 18 years.

(d) Patient confidentiality

At all times Aesthetic Surgery Ireland shall respect and protect the patient confidentiality. Only sensitive personal information relevant to patient care shall be disclosed to clinicians involved in the respective patient's wellbeing.

(e) Cooling off period

All patients are entitled to 14 days, from the date of signing the consent form, to consider whether or not to proceed with the surgery or to seek additional information.



*Additional information
regarding each procedure can be found
on the Aesthetic Surgery Ireland website
www.aestheticsurgery.ie*

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