



Central West Specialists

Ear, Nose & Throat Specialist

BAT EAR DEFORMITY

Bat ear deformity is where the ear is more shaped like a “cup” than the normal appearance where there are ridges and furrows. The aim of the operation is to try to return both ears to a reasonably normal appearance. The operation can usually be carried out on children from about the age of 6 or 7 years. It requires a general anaesthetic. During the operation an incision is made in the groove behind the ear. The cartilage is stitched with some strong sutures to pull the ear into a proper position. Some skin at the back of the ear is usually removed at this time. The ear is then measured to check the distance between the back of the ear and the side of the head and this measurement is taken into account when the other ear is being done. When both ears have had the deformity corrected they are bandaged up. The operation takes about one hour.

Post-operative recovery:

This operation is often quite uncomfortable. The bandages are taken off after two to three days and the sutures are removed at one week.

Possible problems:

1. Persistent deformity: As the cartilage of the ear is very rubbery it is not always possible to get the two ears exactly the same. This can happen occasionally despite all proper care taken during the operation. If there is a minor deformity which troubles the patient it can be improved with a second procedure.
2. Infection: Infection is rare but may require antibiotics through a drip to control it. Infection can develop after going home. These types of infections need to be treated very quickly because they can cause considerable ear deformity if this is not done (“cauliflower” ear).
3. Bleeding: This is uncommon but adults undergoing this procedure should certainly avoid taking Disprin or Aspirin before and after the operation.

It is a good idea after the operation to wear a night time head band to comfortably fit over the ears so they are not put under any excess tension while turning over in bed. This should be done for at least six weeks. A final appointment at about three months is recommended to make sure that the ears appear satisfactory.

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