STAPEDECTOMY:
Post-operative Instructions

Diet:
Because you may experience some vertigo, nausea and vomiting in the immediate post-operative period, you may find it preferable to eat a light, bland diet after the operation. A regular diet may be resumed the day after surgery. You may want to eat softer foods however, as you may have some earache with chewing and opening of the mouth.

Activity/Work:
You may expect to be out of work for 2 weeks following surgery. It is suggested that you rest and recuperate and avoid any strenuous activity or heavy lifting for that time period. You will also be asked to refrain from any strenuous activity or physical labor or sudden movements of the head for one month following the operation as this may cause vertigo.

Medications:
You will be prescribed a pain medication (usually Vicodin). This should be taken as directed. Please keep in mind that pain medications may cause drowsiness. Prescriptions will be sent to your pharmacy on file 1 week prior to your surgery. Please check with the pharmacy to see that it has been filled. If it is not there, please call the office as soon as possible.

General Information:
Avoid forceful nose blowing for at least 2 weeks from the day of surgery, as nose blowing can build up excessive pressure in the operated ear and potentially displace the reconstructed or grafted tympanic membrane. If you must sneeze, please do so with an open mouth as this will decrease the pressure build up in the ear.

When sleeping, we suggest you sleep on the ear that was not operated on. You may have a stitch or two on the outer ear at the site where a tissue graft was taken. You will have a cotton ball in the operated ear. This should be changed when it is soaked and replaced with a clean dry cotton ball.

You must keep the ear dry especially when showering and bathing. This can be accomplished with a cotton ball coated with petroleum jelly placed in the outer ear. A shower cap may provide added protection. You may also
find it helpful to have someone else help you to wash your hair during this time so as to better avoid the water.

Because your ear is packed with Gelfoam, it may feel full or clogged and you may hear crackling sounds. You may also notice some thick, dark or bloody drainage for the week following surgery. If you notice packing coming out of the ear, do not attempt to replace it, and do not remove any of the remaining packing from the ear. You may clean the crusting from the outer portion of the ear with peroxide and Q-tips. NEVER place Q-tips in the ear canal.

Follow-up:
Please keep the post-operative appointment that was made for you. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact our office at (413) 448-8291.

Please contact our office if you notice:
Temperature above 101.5 degrees
Excessive ringing in the ear, severe attacks of vertigo, dizziness or vomiting that does not resolve.
Inability to move one side of the face (inability to close eye and crooked smile).