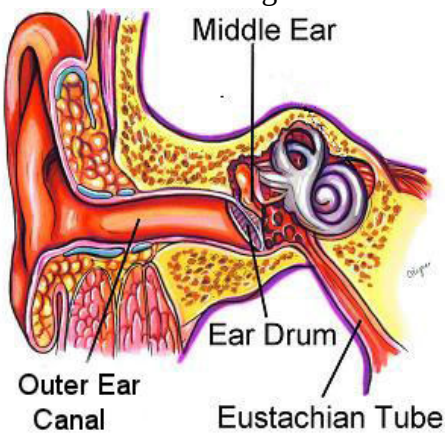
Otosclerosis

Otosclerosis is a condition which produces a gradual hearing loss in one or both ears. It is often associated with the condition called tinnitus (ringing in the ears). It tends to run in families, is more common in females, and generally occurs between the ages of fifteen and thirty-five. It is the most common cause of hearing loss in young adults.



In this condition, an abnormal bone growth occurs at the entrance of the middle ear. This may cause one of the middle ear bones (the stirrup) to become immobile. When this happens, the vibrations from the ear drum cannot be conducted to the middle ear and translated into sound.

DIAGNOSIS

Your caregiver can diagnose this problem by taking a history and conducting hearing tests.

TREATMENT

This condition can often be treated with a surgical procedure called a stapedectomy. In this procedure the stapes is removed and replaced with a tiny wire or stainless steel prosthesis. This is usually healed within a couple weeks. One to two percent of people having this procedure will lose all hearing in the affected ear. These risks can be discussed with your caregiver and should be considered before having the procedure. If your hearing problem is in both ears it may be wise to have the procedure done in only one ear and then wait for a year to see how the results are and if you want to have the other side done. Stapedecomy will not help if there is other damage to the middle ear.

BEFORE SURGERY

You should be present one hour prior to your procedure, unless otherwise directed by your caregiver. Check in at the admissions desk for filling out necessary forms if not preregistered. There may be consent forms to sign prior to the procedure. Should friends or family accompany you, there is a waiting area available for them while you are having your procedure.

LET YOUR CAREGIVERS KNOW ABOUT THE FOLLOWING:

- Allergies
- Medications taken including herbs, eye drops, over the counter medications, and creams
- Use of steroids (by mouth or creams)
- Previous problems with anesthetics
- Possibility of pregnancy, if this applies
- History of blood clots (thrombophlebitis)
- History of bleeding or blood problems
- Previous surgery
- Other health problems

FOLLOWING YOUR PROCEDURE

- You may have temporary dizziness for a couple hours.
- Occasionally a blood clot may form which will block your hearing. These usually go away (*resolve*) without treatment within two weeks.

Only take over-the-counter or prescription medicines for pain, discomfort, or fever as directed by your caregiver.

SEEK IMMEDIATE MEDICAL CARE IF:

- There is redness, swelling, or increasing pain in the wound.
- Pus or drainage is coming from wound.
- An unexplained oral temperature above 102° F (38.9° C) develops, or as your caregiver suggests.
- You notice a foul smell coming from the wound.

Document Released: 04/07/2004 Document Re-Released: 06/05/2009
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