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Otoplasty (External Ear Surgery)

Otoplasty is surgery to change the appearance of a person's external ears. Otoplasty Ear Surgery can take many forms that can range from the surgical change of bringing over-projecting ears closer to the head, reducing the size of very big ears, or reshaping various bends in the cartilage. Other reconstructive procedures deal with the deformed, or absent-microtic ears. Otoplasty surgery involves a combination of moving, reshaping, adding, or removing structural ear elements.

The [external ear](#) is made of a thin structural [cartilage](#) cover over with thin [skin](#). Each of the various folds and structures of the [pinna](#) (external ear) is named. Ear deformity results from distorted, damaged, or missing ear elements. Otoplasty ear surgery options depend on the deformity.

Protruding Ears

Ears that stick out can cause a great deal of emotional distress, social stress, and concerns. Protruding ears can result from a underdeveloped anti-helix (the major crease that folds the ear back), a concha bowl that does not lie back close to the head, or enlarged ear elements. Actual [Macrotia](#), or big ear deformity, is rare.

How otoplasty ear surgery is performed

Otoplasty [anesthesia](#) options depend on the problem to be treated and ability of the patient to cooperate and can include [local anesthesia](#) alone, local anesthesia with [sedation](#), and under general anesthesia (which is generally the case for children). Most otoplasty surgery is performed as a [outpatient surgery](#), some requires a hospital stay. The procedure can take from two to five hours depending on the problem.

[Cartilage](#) is fickle material and has a mind of its own. Incising one side of a flat cartilage piece leaves unopposed elastic forces on the other side and permits the shape to evolve over time. Thus, by

incising one side of the lop-ear cartilage along the new anti-helical fold may be one element of the surgery. This can be done through a small incision, or without an incision: an "**Incisionless Otoplasty**," where a needle is used to model the cartilage.

For many ear operations, one or more incisions give access to the structures to be sculpted. The main, and often only incision, is behind the ear. Other possible incisions depend on what needs to be done. Through the incision behind the ear, the concha bowl can be moved closer to the head, a small tunnel created along the front of a poorly folded [antihelix](#) to weaken this cartilage, sutures placed to reshape the anti-helix fold, and to balance the [ear lobe](#) with the rest of the ear.

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