

Otoplasty:

Otoplasty, is a cosmetic surgery to change the appearance of a person's external ears.

Types of Otoplasty:

Otoplasty can take many forms,

- ✓ bringing the ears closer to the head (often called ear pinning),
- ✓ 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.

The pinna, or external ear, is made of a thin structural cartilage covered over with thin skin. Each of the various folds and structures of the pinna is named. Ear deformity results from distorted, damaged, or missing ear elements. Many otoplasties are performed not because of actual deformity, but because the individual is displeased with the shape of their ears.

Procedure

Otoplasty surgery procedure is usually performed by either an oral and maxillofacial surgeon, plastic surgeon, or ENT surgeon.

The procedure can be performed under local or general anesthetic and can take up to 2-3 hours. The surgeon will make a small incision behind the ear; excess skin and cartilage are then removed and the incision is stitched closed. Another method involves creating a small incision in the back of the ear, removing some skin and using stitches to bend or 'pin' the cartilage back towards the head, but not removing the cartilage itself. The incision is then sewn up.

Recovery period

Bandages and stitches will be removed 7-10 days after the operation, and it is advised to take up to a week off work or school. Swelling will go down over a period of around one to a few weeks, and any soreness or tenderness can be reduced using painkillers.

Risks

Risks involved with ear pinning surgery are minimal, however they can happen. Blood clot formation, asymmetrical or cauliflower ears, bleeding underneath the skin and infection (which can result in scar tissue) are possible risks. Very occasionally the ear or ears may return to their original position and ear pinning surgery will have to be repeated.