

Children's Ear Nose & Throat Center

Sub-specialists of Dell Children's Medical Center of Central Texas

A member of the  Seton Healthcare Family

Phone (512) 324-2720 • Fax (512) 324-2724

After Hours (512) 458-1121

BONE ANCHORED HEARING AID (BAHA)

We appreciate the opportunity to care for your child. Please review this sheet as it will help you know what to expect for your child's surgery. Please do not hesitate to call us if you have any questions or concerns.

WHAT IS A BAHA?

The BAHA works through bone conduction with a sound processor attached to a small titanium implant. The implant is surgically placed in the bone behind the ear. The bone acts as a pathway for sound to travel to the inner ear without involving the ear canal.

THE SURGERY

The BAHA is done under general anesthesia, as an outpatient surgery, and takes about 3-4 hours. The patient remains in the recovery room for 2-4 hours, or until they are able to go home.

PRE-OPERATIVE CARE

- Avoid aspirin products (including Pepto-Bismol) or products containing Ginkgo Biloba or St. John's Wort for two weeks prior to surgery.
- Acetaminophen (Tylenol) may be given as well as over the counter cold medications and antibiotics.
- Please notify your doctor if there is a family history of bleeding tendencies or if the child tends to bruise easily.

POST-OPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS

1. **Care of the BAHA:** A surgical dressing is applied in the operating room. There is a small hole cut in the non-stick dressing that is placed over the abutment (implant) and directly onto the wound. A healing cap is used to keep the non-stick dressing in place. The area is then covered with gauze and a pressure dressing. On the first (1) day after surgery, the gauze and pressure dressing may be removed. The non-stick dressing and healing cap should be left in place. **Keep the dressing dry.**

- 5-6 days after surgery, the healing cap and non-stick dressing can be removed. Gently cleanse the wound with gauze soaked with normal saline solution. Remove any dried blood and reapply a non-stick dressing and healing cap. The patient may wash their hair if the dressing is protected and kept dry.

- 10-14 days after surgery, the dressing and stitches are removed during the post-op appointment. The area will be cleansed of any dried blood or scabs. The doctor will tell you when the patient can wash their hair without protection to the implant site. If the wound is healed, no further dressing will be required.

2. **Fever:** A low grade fever is normal for several days after surgery and should be treated with Tylenol (acetaminophen).

3. **Pain:** Most patients experience mild to moderate pain for 3-5 days after surgery. Tylenol may be given every 4 hours for pain, but not to exceed 5 doses in 24 hours. Please call your surgeon's nurse if the pain is severe or not relieved with Tylenol.

4. **Activity:** No strenuous physical activity or gym class is allowed until approved by the doctor at your post-op appointment.

5. **Diet:** There are no food restrictions following this surgery. As soon as your child can tolerate clear liquids and a light diet, they can resume a normal diet. Some patients experience nausea and vomiting from the anesthesia. This usually occurs during the first 24-36 hours post-op.

WHEN TO CALL OUR OFFICE

Please call the office or after hours number if your child:

- Has a temperature of over 102 F that does not come down with Motrin or Tylenol
- Has bleeding from the wound
- The wound shows any sign of infection including: redness, swelling, drainage, increased pain.
- Persistent vomiting or inability to drink fluids

FOLLOW-UP

Please call the office the day after surgery to schedule a post-op appointment for 10-14 days after the surgery.

GENERAL CARE/MAINTENANCE OF THE BAHA

- Hair can be washed using a mild shampoo - avoid hairspray and gels that may cause buildup on the implant and irritation to the site.
- Gently clean around the implant daily, using tap water and a soft cleaning brush or baby wipes. Brush the inside of the abutment with a soft cleaning brush weekly to avoid build up of skin debris.
- The sound processor should NOT be worn during swimming, showering, or physical activity that might damage it. During contact sports, a headband that covers the abutment can be worn for protection.
- *NOTE* MRI procedures cannot be done without the removal of the hearing aid processor. The post and the implant itself can be present and safely go through the MRI.