

CM03lite Pinnaplasty (child)

This document will give you information about a pinnaplasty. If you have any questions, you should ask your GP or other relevant health professional.

What is a pinnaplasty?

A pinnaplasty is a cosmetic operation to improve the appearance of your child’s ears.

Is a pinnaplasty suitable for my child?

Your child is most likely to benefit from a pinnaplasty if they are self-conscious about their ears and have said this without any prompting from adults, they are being teased or their ears are unusually-shaped. The operation should only be performed if the aim is to improve your child’s self-confidence and to make them more comfortable with their appearance.

What are the benefits of surgery?

If the operation is successful, your child’s ears should have a better shape (see figure 1).

Are there any alternatives to surgery?

In the first six months after birth, it is possible to permanently change the shape of the ears using moulding splints. Once a baby is older than six months, surgery is the only option.

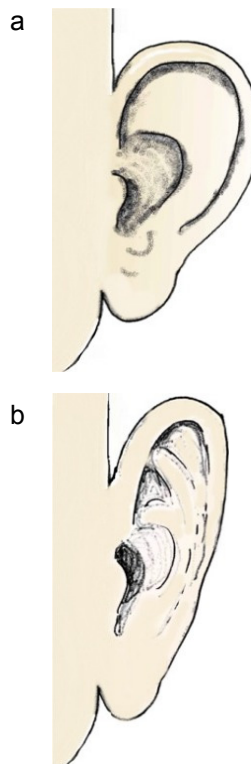


Figure 1

- a Ear sticking out with poorly-developed folds
- b Ear closer to the head with more normal folds

What does the operation involve?

For children, a pinnaplasty is usually performed under a general anaesthetic. In older children (young adults) the operation can be performed using only a local anaesthetic. The operation usually takes about an hour. Your surgeon will make a cut at the back of the ear and peel off some skin from the cartilage. They will change the shape of the cartilage so the ear lies closer to your child’s head. Sometimes your surgeon will also make a cut at the front of the ear and peel back the skin so they can lightly score (notch) the cartilage. This technique tends to make the cartilage bend towards the head. Your surgeon will place a dressing on your child’s head to give the ears support.

What complications can happen?

1 General complications of any operation

- Pain
- Bleeding
- Infection
- Unsightly scarring

2 Specific complications of this operation

- Cosmetic problems

How soon will my child recover?

Your child should be able to go home the following day.

Your child should rest and avoid strenuous activities for the first few weeks while the swelling and bruising settles down. Your child can go back to school after the head dressing has been removed. Your child should avoid any sports activities for six weeks.

The results of a pinnaplasty are usually permanent.

Summary

A pinnaplasty is a cosmetic operation to improve the appearance of your child's ears. The operation should only be performed if the aim is to improve their self-confidence and to make them more comfortable with their appearance. You should consider the options carefully and have realistic expectations about the results.

Further information

- www.eatwell.gov.uk – for advice on maintaining a healthy weight
- www.aboutmyhealth.org - for support and information you can trust
- NHS Direct on 0845 46 47 (0845 606 46 47 - textphone)

Acknowledgements

Author: Mr Eoin O'Broin MD FRCS (Plast) and Mr Graham Offer BSc FRCS (Plast)

Illustrations: Mr Eoin O'Broin MD FRCS (Plast)

This document is intended for information purposes only and should not replace advice that your relevant health professional would give you.

CM03lite

Issued December 2008

Expires end of December 2009



www.rcsed.ac.uk

