

# Eardrum Repair

## What Is It?

Myringoplasty, also known as eardrum repair surgery, is a medical procedure performed to restore a perforated or damaged eardrum. The eardrum (tympanic membrane) is a thin layer of tissue that separates the outer ear from the middle ear and plays a crucial role in hearing. Myringoplasty aims to close the perforation and restore the eardrum's integrity, thereby improving hearing and preventing the risk of infection.

## What Are The Surgical Approaches?

Myringoplasty is typically performed as an outpatient procedure in the UK. There are two main approaches:

1. **Underlay Technique:** In this approach, a graft, often taken from the patient's own tissues, is placed under the remaining eardrum tissue to cover the perforation. This technique aims to recreate the natural anatomy of the eardrum.
2. **Overlay Technique:** The graft is placed over the perforation, allowing the eardrum's remaining tissue to heal beneath it. This technique is used for larger perforations and cases where an underlay technique might not be suitable.

## What Does It Involve?

During myringoplasty, the patient is typically under general anaesthesia or local anaesthesia with sedation. The surgeon accesses the eardrum through the ear canal, gently lifts it, and places the graft according to the chosen technique. The graft is carefully positioned to cover the perforation and then secured in place. Over time, the graft integrates with the surrounding tissue as the eardrum heals.

## How To Prepare?

Preparation for myringoplasty involves discussing your medical history, current medications, and any allergies with your healthcare provider. You might need to fast for a specific period before the procedure, as directed by your healthcare team.

## How Long Does It Take?

The duration of myringoplasty varies based on the complexity of the case and the chosen technique. On average, the surgery typically takes around 1 to 2 hours.

## What Happens After?

After the surgery, you will be monitored as you awaken from anaesthesia. You might experience some temporary ear pain or discomfort, which can usually be managed with pain relief medication. A dressing or packing may be placed in the ear canal to support healing.