

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

What is the stapes bone?

The stapes bone is the innermost of the three hearing bones in your middle ear (see figure 1). Sometimes the stapes bone can get stuck, and locks in place. This decreases the sound being carried across to your inner ear (conductive hearing loss). The problem is usually caused by otosclerosis, a condition that causes the stapes bone and bony capsule of your inner ear to thicken. The problem can also be caused by brittle bone disease.

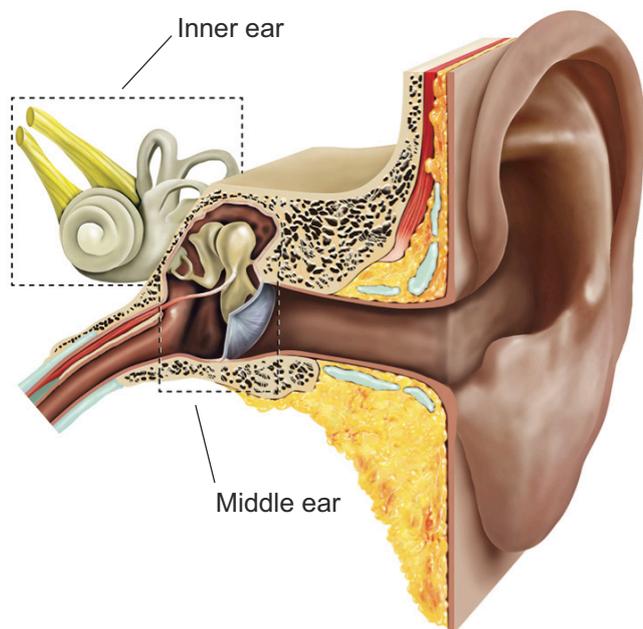


Figure 1

The stapes bone is in the middle ear

What are the benefits of surgery?

Your conductive hearing loss should improve so you will usually not need to wear a hearing aid.

Are there any alternatives to surgery?

A normal hearing aid or sometimes a special bone-anchored hearing aid can often help you to hear better.

What does the operation involve?

The operation is usually performed under a general anaesthetic. The operation usually takes an hour to 90 minutes.

Your surgeon will perform the operation either through a small cut in front of your ear or through a cut around your ear canal inside your ear.

Your surgeon will remove the top part of the stapes bone, make a small hole in the base and then fit an implant made of metal or plastic.

What complications can happen?

1 General complications

- Pain
- Bleeding
- Unsightly scarring
- Blood clots

2 Specific complications

- Complete loss of hearing
- Worse hearing
- Dizziness
- Tinnitus
- Change of taste
- Facial weakness
- Infection of the surgical site (wound)
- Allergic reaction

How soon will I recover?

• In hospital

You may be able to go home the same day. However, your doctor may recommend that you stay a little longer.

It is not unusual to get mild dizziness for a few days.

You should be able to return to work after about two weeks.

Do not blow your nose for a few days. Keep your mouth open when you sneeze.

Regular exercise should help you to return to normal activities as soon as possible. Before you start exercising, ask the healthcare team or your GP for advice.

Most people make a good recovery with better hearing.

Summary

Otosclerosis can cause the stapes bone to lock in place, causing conductive hearing loss. A stapedectomy can improve your hearing without the need for a hearing aid.

Acknowledgements

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