

## Total Ear Cana Ablation (TECA)

### What is a Total Ear Canal Ablation?

A TECA is the definitive salvage procedure for all major ear canal diseases where the entire ear canal is surgically removed along with all diseased content of the middle ear. The main reason or indication for performing a TECA is chronic, painful, non-responsive otitis externa and media (severe infections of the external and middle ear). These patients have typically been medically managed with oral and topical antibiotics and steroids for years with poor or minimal response. TECA is also the treatment of choice for managing tumors contained within the ear canal.

### Procedure and Prognosis

The entire ear canal is dissected free from surrounding tissue allowing for its complete removal. Care is taken to protect the facial nerve during dissection. The middle ear (osseous bulla) is then surgically opened and completely cleaned out (debrided). A drain is placed within the middle ear to provide temporary drainage of the chronically infected site. After surgery the operated ear is deaf, however most patients requiring a TECA have already lost hearing in the affected ear because of long-standing disease. This procedure typically yields good cosmetic results even though there is no longer an ear canal opening. Patients are prescribed antibiotics for 4-6 weeks post-op to completely clear any residual infection. Antibiotic selection is based on culture and sensitivity results (definitive identification of bacteria and what kills it). Complication rates are low after TECA and include incisional infection, loss (temporary or permanent) of fascial nerve function (loss of eye blink function), head tilt (vertigo-like feeling) and formation of a draining tract. In general, patients have an excellent long-term prognosis in that they are pain free and need no further management of ear canal related issues.