

Protruding-ear correction without a scalpell

New operation on 1xTägl.

by RENÉ HILDBRAND

ZÜRICH - Since childhood, Sandra Andrijevic suffered due to her protruding ears; for this she was teased. She was afraid of a bloody operation. But now, the 25-year-old woman could be helped; with a new operation method - without a scalpel!

Dr. Waldemar Merck, plastic surgeon and ENT doctor from Konstanz (Germany) developed the gentler, non-bloody technique six months ago and has operated on 400 ears since then.

Dr. Merck does not cut, he sews. With a needle, thread, and a newfangled knotting technique, the surgeon forms the so-called anthelix fold after the fact. This is what is missing in protruding ears.

The operation lasts an hour and a half for both ears. The patient can go home immediately thereafter.

Only a few blue spots from the needle-sticks attest to the procedure. On children, the operation is performed using general anesthesia; on adults, local anesthetic is used. Correction of both ears costs approximately 4000 Swiss Francs; in general, the insurance company will not pay for the procedure.

Today and tomorrow, the SAT-1 health program 1xTägl. will show how Sandra Andrijevic's protruding ears will be corrected.

Moderator Dr. Samuel Stutz: Protruding ears are a burden for many people. Younger people suffer especially. Our patient always hid her ears because she feared people would laugh at her. The customary, bloody operation scared people away; there was also the possibility of complications. Merck's technique, by contrast, is brilliant.

The new concept of 1xTägl. since this fall begins to take hold: up to 70,000 viewers (market share five to seven percent) watch this health show.

Stutz: people are still not used to watching a medical show on SAT-1. We are currently working intensively on new elements to increase viewer loyalty. <1xTägl.> should not be a mini-edition of <Gesundheit-Sprechstunde>; instead, it should be a TV format with its very own face.

In January, the weight-loss experiment will begin. All Swiss can take part. The lucky people who are invited onto the show will receive 100 Swiss Francs for every kilo they lose. In addition, a medical quiz is planned in cooperation with the print magazine "Gesundheit-Sprechstunde."

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