

Nine stitches and the ears are fastened

Konstanz doctor has developed a new method for plastic surgery

KONSTANZ . People with protruding ears who wanted to correct this optical blemish once had to submit themselves to risky operations. Now that's all over with. In Konstanz, only stitching is required.

by Kai Holoch

"I had no idea that there were so many people with protruding ears." Since Waldemar-Heinz Merck introduced his new operation method, he can hardly save himself from the calls. The specialist for ENT diseases

and plastic operations began fastening ears his way four years ago.

His method is nearly risk-free. Previously, it was necessary to cut the ear open and then attempt to reduce the elasticity of the cartilage in

various ways. This complicated procedure caused

swelling and bruises in patients; and significant due to the large wound was also the fear of infection, which is difficult

to combat given the poor blood supply in the ear area. Before each operation, patients had to sign a release, indicating that they were willing to live with this risk.

For 20 years, Waldemar-Heinz Merck also operated according to this method.

Then, he read an article in a medical journal about a combined operation. The

ear was cut open, but it was also fastened with the help of nylon thread. Now he has developed this method further and can avoid incisions completely.

A maximum of nine stitches are necessary, whereby Merck knots an indestructible nylon thread in a special way. This creates a natural-looking

new fold in the ear, which lies as desired against the head. The thread itself

runs under the skin in the tissue; it is invisible. When the stitches are healed,

no one would ever know that the ear has been treated. "Even professionals

whom I have introduced to the method could not distinguish between normal ears and ears that had been operated on," explains Merck proudly.

But it's more than the result that has convinced the professionals: "all the

previous risks are avoided," says Merck. The only

"injury" that occurs are the stitches. These are painful, but the risk of infection

is minimal. In the four years in which Merck has been operating using this

method, there have never been problems. Normally, local anesthetic is

sufficient for this method. For it is even possible that the patient can be

released on the day of the operation. With small children, he tends to operate

under a general anesthetic.

The operation is theoretically conceivable from age five upwards. Normally,

one operates on children before they start school or in the first or second

grades if they determine that they are teased because of their ears. According

to Waldemar-Heinz Merck, thanks to publicity about the new method, he has

developed a whole new clientele. On his operating schedule is a 63-year-old

woman, who has suffered all her life with protruding ears and has now signed

up for the procedure.

The rush is so great that he alone can no longer manage the operations, says

Merck. Therefore, as soon as possible, he wants to introduce his colleagues to

his operation method in seminars and professional development courses. For

Merck is certain: "This method will replace all others."

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