



Postoperative Care Instructions Following Neck Dissection

Medications

- Alternate Tylenol (acetaminophen) 500mg and prescribed narcotic pain med every 3 hours.
- If no narcotic is given, or you prefer not to take the narcotic you can alternate Tylenol (acetaminophen) 500mg with Motrin 600mg every 3 hours.
- Avoid blood thinners such as Aspirin, Coumadin, Heparin, Plavix, Eliquis. You will need to discuss being off this medication with the physician that prescribes it. They will determine how long you can hold this medication, before and after surgery.
- Resume all other medications unless otherwise noted.

Activity

- **For 24 hours:** Limit your activity for the next 24 hours and get plenty of rest.
- **For 1 week:** No heavy lifting or pushing, active sports, strenuous exercise, or heavy household work to reduce the risk of bleeding. Objects that cannot be lifted with one hand are considered too heavy. You may walk and do light household activities.
- You may plan to return to work in 1-2 weeks, or as instructed.

Diet

- Diet as tolerated, unless instructed otherwise
- Drink plenty of fluids.

Wound Care

- Keep incision clean and dry. Avoid tension or pulling at stitches.
- You may shower after the drain is removed. Do not scrub the incision.
- Coat suture line gently with Polysporin as instructed by physician.
- You may go home with a drain. You will be shown how to care for the drain. Please record the output amount and bring to your follow up appointment.

Call your doctor (or go to the emergency room) if you have

- Fever over 101.5 F that doesn't improve with Tylenol
- Any active bleeding or trouble breathing
- Surgical area becomes red, swollen, warm to touch, or drains pus
- Patient becomes listless, hard to arouse
- Urine changes color, especially if it becomes cola-colored

Please contact our office at 478-743-8953 if you have any questions or concerns.

Please attempt to contact our office first so that we may advise you appropriately. If for any reason, you are unable to reach our office or your surgeon in an emergency, please go to the nearest emergency room.