



Postoperative Care Instructions Following Thyroidectomy or Parathyroidectomy

Medications

- **Calcium:** If you had your whole thyroid removed, or had parathyroid surgery, you may be given calcium. Take this as directed. Be sure to finish the calcium and not stop before you are scheduled to. If you experience numbness or tingling of your lips or fingers, take additional calcium until it resolves. You may take 2 pills every 30 minutes until resolution. If it doesn't get better, call your doctor.
- **Synthroid:** If you had your whole thyroid removed, you will be given Synthroid (thyroid hormone replacement). The proper dosage will eventually be determined by your primary care physician by gradual adjustment which may take several months.
- You can expect to have some pain the first 24 to 48 hours, especially with swallowing. Take your prescription pain medicine as needed for pain. Some discomfort may persist for up to 1 week.
- Do not drive or operate heavy machinery while taking your prescription pain medication. It may make you drowsy. You may substitute Tylenol or over the counter medication containing acetaminophen for your prescription pain medicine. If in doubt ask your doctor or a pharmacist.
- Do not take aspirin, ibuprofen, naproxen or over the counter medications containing these medications for two weeks.
- You should resume taking all other medications the day after surgery except as noted by your doctor.
- 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.

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

- You may shower as usual as soon as you like after surgery. Do not scrub the incision but it's okay to get it wet. Do not pick at or remove the skin glue until 2 weeks after surgery. If the glue is still there at 3 weeks after surgery, you may remove the Band-Aid (Steri-Strip) and the rest of the glue. If it comes off early, simply keep the area clean and dry.
- It is common to have some pain when swallowing or hoarseness for the first few days.

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
- Any 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
- Cramping or spasms in your hands or feet

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.