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## Thyroid Surgery / Parathyroid Surgery

### After Surgery Care Information

#### Activity:

- Avoid strenuous exertion including heavy lifting, bending, and straining for 1-3 weeks after your surgery. Your doctor will let you know when it is ok to resume strenuous activity.
- General anesthesia can affect physical coordination and mental abilities. You should not make any major decisions, drive, cycle, etc. for 24 hours after the anesthetic.
- Avoid looking up for 1-3 weeks as this can potentially cause your surgical incision to open up. Limit chewing and facial expressions that put stress on the incision until cleared by your doctor.

#### Diet:

- Unrestricted - resume your usual diet. Start with clear liquids and advance your diet as tolerated after surgery. A mild sore throat is not atypical for 3-5 days after surgery.

#### Medications:

- For the best surgical result, take all medications as prescribed.
  - No aspirin or aspirin-related products (such as Advil, Aleve, Motrin, Ibuprofen, *etc.*) should be taken for at least 10 days following surgery.

<b>Tylenol</b>	Please take <b>1000 mg every 6 hours</b>
<b>Oxycodone</b>	A <b>pain medication</b> such as oxycodone may be given. Take it in addition to scheduled Tylenol for moderate / severe pain that is not controlled with Tylenol. Do NOT drive while taking this medication
<b>Keflex / Clindamycin</b>	If an <b>antibiotic</b> is given, please take as directed to completion
<b>OsCal + vitamin D, Rocaltrol, +/- dexamethasone</b>	If you had a parathyroidectomy or a total thyroidectomy, you may be given some or all of these <b>medications to keep you calcium levels in the normal range</b> . These must be taken as directed. Failure to do so may result in a medical emergency and could be life-threatening.
<b>Labs</b>	You may be asked to have your <b>labs drawn</b> to ensure your calcium levels stay in the normal range. Please obtain these labs as directed (usually one day after surgery and one day prior to your follow up appointment).

#### Wound care:

- Keep the operated area **dry** unless otherwise instructed.
- If you have a **pressure dressing** (large dressing or head wrap with large tape) over your incision, you may remove it carefully in 24 hours.
- **Steri-strips**, (tapes on skin), should be left in place as long as possible. If the tapes come off before your first scheduled postoperative visit, call the office for instructions. If steri-strips peel up on the edges, the edges can be carefully trimmed back.
- If your incision was not taped/covered, then you should cleanse the area with a 1:1 ratio of **hydrogen peroxide and water** three times per day.
- If a crust forms around the incision line or over the area, do NOT remove it, but clean with the hydrogen peroxide and water gently.
- Apply **bacitracin or polysporin ointment**. You may need to purchase ointment if none was supplied to you after surgery. **Do NOT use Neosporin.**



**Drain:**

- Some patients are discharged with a thin drain tube and reservoir called a grenade.
- **Instructions:** Every 12 hours empty the grenade and record (on paper) the amount of fluid collected, the date, and the time. Discard the fluid that is removed from the grenade. Bring the paper with the recorded amounts to your after surgery appointment.
  - Please call the office daily with drain output totals. Once drain output is less than 25-30 mL in a 24 hour period, the office will schedule an appointment to have drain removed.

**Special precautions:**

- Avoid cigarette smoking or exposure to smoke filled environments as much as possible. Smoking can negatively affect your overall healing.

<b>Call the doctor's office for:</b>		<b>(702) 834 - 5886</b>
<b>Symptoms of Low Calcium Levels</b>	<p>Low calcium levels in the blood can be life-threatening. Symptoms include: <b>numbness or tingling around your mouth, fingers and/or toes, muscle cramps/spasms/weakness, facial twitching, slow heartbeat, mental disturbance, or seizures.</b> If you have these symptoms you may need to be evaluated at the hospital. Take your prescribed calcium medications to avoid this.</p> <p><b>Call the Office at (702) 834-5886 to find out where you should go (Summerlin Hospital or Centennial Hills Hospital).</b></p>	
<b>Bleeding</b>	If swelling, pain, difficulty swallowing, difficulty breathing or significant increase in drain output that is bright red blood, call the office for further instruction.	
<b>Fever</b>	It is normal for the patient to have a slightly higher temperature after surgery. The higher temperature can last a few days. This is normal. Please call the office if the patient has a moderate to high temperature (greater than 101 degrees orally).	
<b>Pain</b>	If the pain is not helped by routine and/or prescribed medication or the pain is getting worse, it should be reported to the doctor.	
<b>Follow-Up</b>	<p>If the follow up visit for after surgery is not already scheduled, please call the office. This visit should be 6-10 days from the date of your surgery.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If you have a drain, you may need to follow up 1-3 days after surgery for drain removal. See drain section for details.</li> <li>• <b>Labs:</b> Total thyroidectomy and parathyroidectomy patients please ensure you obtain the requested labs as directed (usually one day after surgery and one day prior to your one week follow up appointment).</li> </ul>	

If you are uncertain about any of the above items or have any questions, please contact our office at **(702) 834-5886** from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Monday through Friday. After hours, the office phone number will help you reach the on-call doctor for emergencies.

If you are unable to reach the on-call ENT doctor, **go directly to the Emergency Room (NOT an urgent care)**. There will be a doctor there to treat the patient and to notify your doctor. However, it is best to talk to your doctor first.

