



THYROIDECTOMY POST OPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS

POST OPERATIVE CARE

There will be a water proof bandage over the incision, it is ok to shower with the bandage on. 2 days after surgery you are allowed to take this bandage off. Please start applying a thin film of an antibacterial ointment (e.g. Polysporin) to the incision at this time, at least three times a day. Please avoid any activity that pulls across the incision such as shaving across the incision for at least 2 weeks. The stitches will be removed 5-8 days after surgery at your post-operative visit.

MEDICATIONS

Take pain medication with food and do not drink alcohol or drive while using pain medicine. For the first few nights you should set your alarm for every 4 hours to take your pain medication. As your pain lessens, try using extra-strength acetaminophen (Tylenol) instead of your narcotic medication. If you are taking narcotic medication regularly you may begin to experience constipation and should take a stool softener. These medications are over-the-counter (such as Docusate Sodium).

ACTIVITY

No heavy lifting or straining for the first week. For the first few days, it is recommended to sleep and rest (watch TV or read a book). Going for walks during the first few days is a good idea. After the first week, you may slowly progress and resume to full activity. Please sleep elevated the first 3-4 days after surgery to decrease swelling/pain.

DIET

Patients who have received general anesthesia may experience some nausea and/or occasional vomiting. Therefore, we recommend you eat and drink in small quantities for the first 24 hours. Start with liquids and advance to a regular diet as tolerated.

GENERAL ANESTHESIA

Do not drive for 24 hours following general anesthesia or while taking pain medication. Do not drink any alcohol for 24 hours following general anesthesia or while taking pain medication. You must arrange for a ride and have a responsible adult stay with you for 24 hours after surgery.

WORK

Most patients plan to take 1 week off of work to recover. Every patient is different and some return to work sooner. This will depend on the extent of your surgery, your recovery experience and the nature of your work. If you have a desk job, you may be able to return to work sooner.

TRAVEL

No airplane travel for at least 1 week following surgery.

**CALL OUR OFFICE (760) 479-2100**

For a persistent temperature above 101.5 degrees or severe chills, nausea or vomiting, pain not relieved by oral medication, difficulty breathing, redness or swelling at surgical site. If unable to reach our office with an urgent or severe problem, call 911 or go to the nearest emergency room.

FOLLOW UP APPOINTMENTS

Your post-operative visit is approximately 7-10 days after surgery. At this time, we will remove your sutures, review your pathology results and discuss whether further testing is necessary. These appointments should already be scheduled for you by our surgery scheduler.