

Thyroidectomy

In Hospital

When you wake up after your operation, you will have a drip in your arm and a small drain tube coming out from the side of your neck. You should be able to eat & drink within 4 hours of your operation and get out of bed either later that day or the next day.

If the whole of your thyroid gland is removed you may require a number of blood tests to monitor the calcium in your blood.

Normally you will stay in hospital 1 or 2 nights. Your drain will be removed in the hospital before you go home. If the whole of the thyroid has been removed your surgeon will have prescribed you some thyroid hormone tablets to take at home.

At Home

Your wound will have a water-proof dressing on it but it is advisable to try and keep your wound dry for 3-4 days after the operation. It is OK to peel the waterproof cover off the neck after 5-7 days if it starts to peel. There may be a small amount of blood discharge from the site of the drain. This is normal. The skin around your wound may feel numb. This numbness will gradually resolve over a number of weeks or months.

You should avoid heavy lifting or exercise for 2 weeks.

Your neck muscles may be stiff and movement of the neck may be difficult for several weeks after surgery but this will gradually improve. Gentle neck mobilisation is encouraged.

Medications

You will have been prescribed some pain relief tablets and occasionally some antibiotics. Please **avoid using aspirin** or other blood thinning tablets unless approved by your surgeon.

When to contact your surgeon

- If you develop obvious swelling of the neck around the wound (a small amount of swelling is quite common)
- If you have any difficulty breathing
- If you develop cramps or spasms in your hands or feet
- If you develop a high fever, increased pain or pus leaks from your wound.

It is best to contact the office on (03)9895 0400 during business hours or your surgeon after hours via the hospital where you had the surgery.

Follow up appointments

Normally you will have a post-operative appointment approximately 1 to 2 weeks after surgery. This appointment is generally made by our staff BEFORE your operation and should be included with your pre-operative paperwork. If you are uncertain as to the time of your appointment, please contact your surgeon's secretary via email.