



POST OPERATIVE NECK OR THYROID SURGERY INSTRUCTIONS

PAIN: Some mild to moderate incision pain is normal for up to 1-2 weeks after surgery. A sore throat from the breathing tube and the endoscopy (if done) is also normal for 2-3 days after surgery. You may also have pain in the back of your neck due to the position of extension that your head is in during surgery for several days. For pain use Extra-Strength *Tylenol* (Acetaminophen) since it is usually strong enough. If *Tylenol* is not strong enough use the pain killer you were prescribed. **DO NOT** use any “*Aspirin-Type*” (NSAID) pain killers for at least 1 week since they increase bleeding, and include *Advil, Aleve, Naprosyn, and Motrin* among others (so read the label first).

DIET: You may eat your regular diet and drink plenty of liquids.

ACTIVITY: Fatigue is normal for up to 2 weeks and most patients plan on taking 1 week off work. Regular walking and light activity are encouraged starting the day after surgery. Avoid strenuous physical activity including bending, straining, heavy lifting, or rigorous exercise for 2 weeks after surgery.

WOUND CARE:

- (1) Apply Bacitracin antibiotic ointment (over the counter) very sparingly to the incision 3 times a day for 14 days. Wipe off the old ointment and then reapply. This keeps the drainage from the incision from forming dry crusts/scabs which slow the healing and increase the risk of a poor scar.
- (2) Showering is permitted the day after surgery but cover the incision to avoid exposing it to the water until the sutures are removed.
- (3) If you have a drain placed and are not admitted to hospital overnight you will follow-up in 2 days (Thursday morning at 9:00 am) to have Dr. Lueg remove the drain.
- (4) If you had a drain in the neck removed, some bloody drainage for a few days from the drain hole in your skin is normal.
- (5) Please make a **Follow-Up Appointment** for around 1 week after your surgery to have sutures removed and discuss your pathology.
- (6) Until your incision has healed and faded (usually 8-12 months) avoid direct sun exposure (which can cause the incision line to permanently tan dark) by covering or applying SPF 30-45 sun block.

NOTIFY: our office immediately (643-9999) or go to the nearest Emergency Room if any of the following occurs:

- brisk bleeding continues despite gentle pressure with gauze on the incision for 30 minutes
- sudden painful and tense collection of blood occurs under the skin (pressure hematoma)
- you have a fever more than a day after surgery which is higher than 101.5 Fahrenheit
- incision becomes red, painful/tender, or looks like it is getting infected
- any trouble breathing
- you have any other serious concerns

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