



For questions or emergency care, please contact us at 985-327-5905.

POSTOPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS **Thyroidectomy or Parathyroidectomy**

1st Week – Wound Care:

- Leave “steri-strips” (small band-aids) in place over the neck incision until your follow-up clinic appointment with your physician.
- You may remove the small gauze dressing over the drain hole (if a drain was removed) the following day after discharge from the hospital.
- Showering is preferable to bathing. If bathing, do not submerge your neck incision under water.
- No cigarette smoking or use of other tobacco products.
- Avoid trauma to the incision.
- No heavy lifting or activity.
- Keep your head of bed elevated at night or try sleeping on two or more pillows.
- Pre-operative at home medications may be resumed unless otherwise specified.

2nd-8th Week – Wound Care:

- Continue to not use cigarettes or other tobacco products.
- Continue to avoid trauma to the incision.
- Apply a light coating of Vaseline or antibiotic ointment over the incision multiple times throughout the day (can stop this after two to three weeks).
- Keep incision out of the sunlight, or if expecting exposure to sunlight, apply sunscreen (45 SPF or greater) to incision. This is to prevent/decrease tanning of the incision line. Continue this practice for the first six months to one year after your surgery.
- As an additional scar prevention measure, apply silicone band-aids (for example: “Scar Zone” or “Merderma” bandages) at night for eight to ten weeks after surgery.

Following the above recommendations is not a guarantee that your incision will be imperceptible and/or not produce a noticeable scar.

Things to Remember:

- Take all medications as prescribed (for example: Vitamin D, Calcium Carbonate, Thyroid medications, etc.) upon leaving the hospital after your surgery.
- If not done already, call your Primary Care doctor or Endocrinology doctor schedule your return appointment.
- Expect some mild hoarseness or discomfort during swallowing for the first few days (or even longer) after surgery.

When to Call the Doctor:

- Temperature elevation above 101.5 degrees.
- Sudden increase in swelling, pain, warmth, and/or redness at neck incision site.
- Hemorrhage (profuse bleeding).
- Discharge from the wound edges or other evidence of infection.
- Development of any medication reaction.
- Numbness or tingling of the lips and/or in the tips of fingers or toes.

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