

ENT ASSOCIATES

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POSTOPERATIVE NECK SURGERY INCLUDING THYROIDECTOMY, PARATHYROIDECTOMY, PAROTIDECTOMY, EXCISION of SUBMANDIBULAR GLAND and EXCISION OF NECK MASS OR CYST

DIET

Patients who have received general anesthesia may experience nausea and occasionally, vomiting. It is therefore preferable to eat a bland, light meal or a liquid diet on the first day after the surgery. Regular diet may be resumed the next day. Also, pain pills may cause nausea if taken on an empty stomach. It is preferable to take those pills with a piece of toast or some food.

ACTIVITY AND WOUND CARE

- Elevate the head as much as possible. Sit in a recliner or use 2-3 pillows when sleeping. Head elevation reduces bruising and swelling. Occasionally, you may notice that the bruises or swelling have migrated to other places (usually lower regions).
- You may shower after 48 hours. Baths and spot cleaning may be done until you are able to shower. Keep the wound dry for 48 hours and do not submerge for one week.
- No heavy lifting over 10 pounds for 2-3 weeks.
- You may have a dressing or your wound may be exposed. If there is a dressing it may be removed on the second postoperative day, but allow the steri-strip tape to fall off on its own. If this tape gets wet just dab it dry and it will stay in place. They should stay in place for 4-7 days. If they peel off then clean as instructed for an exposed wound.
- If the incision and sutures or staples are exposed, then clean the incision twice a day with hydrogen peroxide and apply antibiotic ointment (Bacitracin, Neosporin, etc).

DRAINS

If you are sent home with a drain, then you should have an appointment to come to the office for removal within 3 days. Until removal, you should clean around the drain as instructed above for an exposed wound. Empty the bulb 2 times a day and record each time how much was emptied (milliliters are marked on the bulb). After emptying, make sure the bulb is compressed and plugged so it will suction properly. If the drain gets pulled out, then do not try to replace it. Call if the wound begins to swell significantly, redness increases significantly, or new drainage develops.

MEDICATIONS

An antibiotic is usually prescribed for 7-10 days following the surgery. You may also receive a prescription for pain medication in the form of codeine or hydrocodone. These narcotic medications cause drowsiness and constipation. Do not drive, operate heavy machinery or make important decisions while on these medications. You may need to take an over-the-counter stool softener if you become constipated. A medication for nausea may also be prescribed and the preferred route for this is a suppository.

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FOLLOW-UP

Please make a follow-up appointment to be seen in 2-3 weeks by calling the office at the phone number above.

Thank you again for the opportunity to participate in your health care! Please let us know how we may make your surgical experience more pleasant!

JEFFREY C. NAU, MD