

Thyroidectomy or Parathyroidectomy

General Surgery Home Care Instructions

Skin care

- You may shower after you return home
- You may wash the incision with mild soap and water
- The incision normally heals fully within a few weeks, but the feeling of firmness under the incision may last several months.

Activity

- You may return to work in 7-10 days or as directed by your doctor
- You should not drive until you can comfortably turn your head or if you are taking narcotic pain medicine.
- It is normal for you to feel stiff in the front and back of your neck and it may take several days to resolve.
- The skin above and below the incision will be numb. This will improve over several weeks.
- Light activities are OK.

Controlling Pain

- You may have a feeling of fullness in your neck and some difficulty swallowing for the next 4-6 weeks.
- Take throat spray or lozenges for a sore throat.
- For the first few weeks you may notice that very thick or tough foods are harder to swallow.

Diet and medicines

- Go back to your usual diet and medicines, but do not take pre-op thyroid medicines.
- If you had a TOTAL THYROIDECTOMY
 - If you feel tingling around your mouth and fingers, take OSCAL tabs every 4-6 hours for one day. Continue taking OSCAL only if you continue to feel tingling. You may also take generic brand calcium tablets instead.
 - Your doctor may prescribe a replacement thyroid table when you are discharged from the hospital. You will need to take this medicine for the rest of your life.

Call your doctor if you have

- Numbness or tingling around your face or hands that OSCAL or generic brand calcium tablets do not relieve within an hour
- Muscle spasms
- Temperature greater than 101.5 F
- More drainage or swelling around your incision

If you have any questions or concerns please call us at **650 641-7861**

