

Denver Center for Endocrine Surgery

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INSTRUCTIONS AFTER THYROID/PARATHYROID SURGERY

WOUND CARE

- You may have a Steri-Strip (tan or white tape) or Dermabond (clear glue) which should stay ON for two weeks or until they fall off.
- You may shower the day after surgery with soap and water. It is okay for the Steri-Strip or Dermabond to get a little wet. **DO NOT SOAK IN A TUB.** Pat the wound dry.
- Do not apply any lotions or creams unless instructed by your surgeon.

PAIN MANAGEMENT AND MEDICATIONS

- It is normal to have a sore throat, stiff neck, and pain at your surgery site. It may also feel different to swallow. Throat lozenges or sprays may help.
- If you have a cough from mucous/drainage in your throat you can take a mucous thinning medicine (guaifenesin/Mucinex).
- Take your pain medications as instructed – this helps control the pain better.
- Ibuprofen (Motrin/Advil), naproxen (Aleve) or acetaminophen (Tylenol) may also be taken.
- **DO NOT DRIVE** while using prescription pain medication.
- **YOU MAY NEED TO TAKE CALCIUM AFTER SURGERY:**

TYPE: _____

DOSE: _____

- You may be given additional prescription medicines for calcium balance (Calcitriol, PhosLo, HCTZ, or others). **THESE MUST BE TAKEN AS PRESCRIBED - THERE ARE NO OVER-THE-COUNTER SUBSTITUTES.**
- ***If you take thyroid hormone:*** It is best to take it in the morning at least 30 minutes before food or other medicines (including calcium/vitamins).

DIET AND CONSTIPATION

- You may eat a normal diet.
- Constipation is very common with the use of pain medications and calcium. Drink plenty of water (8-10 glasses per day).
- If needed, you can take a stool softener or mild laxative (e.g., Milk of Magnesia or Miralax) once or twice per day with a glass of hot liquid (tea, coffee, etc.).

ACTIVITY AND FOLLOWUP

- Avoid heavy lifting (>20 lbs.) and sports for two weeks. Most patients return to work in one week.
- You may drive when you are no longer taking prescription pain pills and feel safe turning your head both ways.

See your surgeon: _____

See your endocrinologist: _____

Next calcium blood test: _____

Next thyroid blood test: _____

WHEN TO CALL THE SURGEON'S OFFICE:

- Fever higher than 101 degrees.
- Redness or pus coming from the wound.
- Symptoms of low calcium (tingling in the mouth/fingers) not improved after two extra doses of calcium.
- Trouble passing urine (unable to "go", pain, or burning).
- Severe pressure or swelling at your surgery site (bigger than an orange).
- **Trouble breathing – CALL 911.**