

Total and Partial Thyroidectomy

Pain Management and Medications

A prescription for pain medication may be given prior to leaving the hospital. Take as instructed.

You may resume your regular medications as advised by your doctor.

An ice pack may be used to help with pain and swelling: 20 minutes on and 20 minutes off. Ensure it is not touching your bare skin by wrapping it in a towel.

If you have had a total thyroidectomy, you will receive a prescription for thyroid hormone replacement. You will need to take this for the rest of your life to replace your natural thyroid hormone. Your doctor will let you know when to start taking this.

Activity/Exercise

You may slowly start your normal activities. Allow at least one week before starting any strenuous activities, heavy lifting, jogging or swimming. Do not be afraid to move your neck. Gently flexing and stretching your neck muscles will prevent stiffness.

Diet

Eat soft, easy-to-swallow foods for the first few days after surgery to help with the pain when swallowing. You may resume your regular diet when it is easier to swallow.

Dressing/Wound Care

You will have strips over your incision. Do not remove these. They will fall off on their own in about 2 weeks. You may shower 48 hours after surgery. Let water run over incision and pat dry with a clean towel.

Danger Signs to Watch out For

Call your surgeon if you have any of the following:

- Increased soreness or pain around your incision
- Fever above 38°C or 100.5°F

Go to the nearest Emergency Department if you have any of the following:

- Increasing swelling or redness around incision
- Lots of bleeding from incision (e.g., soaking your bandage an hour after putting it on)
- New onset of: weak voice, difficulty eating, a lot of coughing
- Numbness or tingling in your face or lips

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Follow-Up

Follow up with your surgeon in 2-4 weeks. You will need to call the office for an appointment.

If you have any questions, please contact your surgeon's office. For emergencies, please go to the nearest Emergency Department.

Other Instructions:
