



# Colorado Ear, Nose & Throat Group

## Thyroid & Parathyroid Surgery Instructions

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### About Thyroid and Parathyroid Surgery:

The thyroid and parathyroid glands are glands that produce and regulate the levels of vital hormones in the body. Thyroid hormone essentially functions to regulate your metabolism while parathyroid hormone works to regulate calcium levels in the body. Surgery on these glands requires a small incision in the lower midline of the neck and careful dissection to free the involved gland from surrounding structures.

### Before your surgery:

- **If you are on blood thinners talk to your prescribing provider for instructions on when to stop before surgery and when to restart them after surgery**  
Avoid any medications or supplements that can thin the blood such as aspirin, ibuprofen, fish oil, and ginkgo biloba the week before surgery.
- **You may not eat or drink anything, including water after midnight on the day of surgery. However, you may take medications with a sip of water the day of surgery.**

### After your surgery:

- **Incision Care:**  
Your incision will most likely be closed with surgical glue. This has a purple hue. Do not pick at or remove this - it will fall off on its own. You may wash normally with the surgical glue in place
- **Activity:**  
It is recommended that you avoid all strenuous activity activity for two weeks after surgery to prevent complications and bleeding
- **For Patients Undergoing Total Thyroidectomy:**  
Because the thyroid produces vital hormones, your doctor will start you on thyroid hormone replacement (i.e. Synthroid) after surgery. Additionally it is recommended that you take a Calcium plus Vitamin D3 supplement after surgery. It is recommended that you take 2 pills, three times a day the first week after surgery, then 2 pills twice daily the second week, then 2 pill once daily the third week after surgery and then stop.
- **For Patients Undergoing Total Parathyroidectomy:**  
Because the parathyroid gland regulates calcium metabolism, your doctor will start you on calcium supplementation after surgery. Additionally it is recommended that you take a Calcium plus Vitamin D3 supplement after surgery. It is recommended that you take 2 pills, three times a day the first week after surgery, then 2 pills twice daily the second week, then 2 pill once daily the third week after surgery and then stop.
- **For Patients Undergoing Partial Thyroidectomy:**  
Because only half the thyroid is removed in the surgery, you will not require any post-operative calcium replacement or thyroid hormone replacement.
- **If any heavy or profuse bleeding, please go to the closest emergency room**  
Less than 1% of patients will have persistent nasal bleeding that will require another trip to the operating room to treat. Please contact your surgeon if this occurs.