

**THYROIDECTOMY POST-OP INSTRUCTIONS:**

- Diet:
  - Patients may resume a regular diet without restrictions.
  - Many patients note a scratchy throat for the first day or two and may prefer soft foods initially.
- Activity:
  - Light to moderate activity as tolerated is permitted.
  - Patients may carefully turn the head from side to side and look up and down without needing to worry about stitches.
  - Heavy lifting (more than 10 pounds), straining, and strenuous exercise should be avoided for at least one week following surgery.
- Wounds:
  - All stitches are absorbable.
  - You may shower normally and let soapy water run over the incisions.
  - Do not submerge the incisions in a bathtub or swimming pool for 7 days after surgery.
  - Any steri strips over the incision can get wet when bathing and can be removed as they start to peel off over the course of the first week. When they do come off, apply antibiotic ointment such as Neosporin or bacitracin twice daily.
  - Please contact our office if any redness, increased swelling, or increased pain develops at the surgery site.
- Pain:
  - Neck pain and stiffness are to be expected.
  - Use Tylenol (acetaminophen) for baseline pain control.
  - Use the prescription pain medication for pain that is not controlled with Tylenol. Do not drive while taking narcotic pain medication.
  - Consider an over-the-counter stool softener (e.g. Colace) for constipation from the narcotics.
- Medications:
  - If you had your entire thyroid gland removed, you will be started on levothyroxine (Synthroid). This must be taken daily and should start the day after surgery.
  - You may be started on Os-Cal. This is a temporary calcium supplement. If you notice numbness/tingling around your lips or fingertips, you can take Tums for additional calcium. If the symptoms persists, please call our office; hypocalcemia requires treatment.
- Nausea/Vomiting:
  - Some patients experience nausea/vomiting. Typically this improves within 48 hours of surgery.
  - Please call to speak with our nurse if you need help managing nausea or vomiting.
- Fever:
  - A low-grade fever is common after surgery.
  - Please contact our office if the temperature is 102°F or higher.
- If you have any other questions or concerns, please call the office and ask to speak with the nurse.