



Ear, Nose & Throat Consultants of Nevada
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Parathyroidectomy postoperative care instructions

Parathyroid surgery is the removal of abnormal parathyroid glands. Hyperparathyroidism, the most common parathyroid disease, causes excess parathyroid hormone production, which raises calcium levels. These elevated levels can lead to “brain fog”, kidney stones, depression, body aches and pains, osteoporosis, calcification of the blood vessels, stroke and heart attacks. These hormonal imbalances are caused by one or more abnormal parathyroid glands; however, surgical removal of the abnormal gland(s) cures the condition.

Wound Care: Your wound is covered with Steri Strips. Steri Strips are thin adhesive strips which are placed over an incision to help it heal. Keep the Steri Strips dry for the first 24 hours, and then you may gently cleanse the area daily with mild soap and water. You should avoid scrubbing or scratching the incision site. Leave them in place until they fall off on their own or your provider tells you to remove them. They will usually fall off the skin within 10 to 14 days.

Activity: No heavy lifting. You should not participate in any strenuous activities. You can discuss when you may resume your daily exercise/fitness activities at your postoperative office visit. In general, no lifting heavier than 5-10 pounds for the first week, and no heavy lifting or strenuous activity for the first two weeks. Activity may resume to normal at that time.

Diet: You may resume a regular diet, although at first, many patients prefer a clear liquid diet like apple juice, Jell-O, or broth. Feel free to advance back to your regular diet as tolerated. Post-surgery, there are no dietary restrictions.

What to expect: You may have a sore throat or a hoarse voice after surgery. You should drink plenty of fluids and you may also take throat lozenges to relieve symptoms. Symptoms may persist for a few days after surgery and improve over time. If your symptoms do not improve by your postoperative office visit, inform your surgeon of your symptoms.

Shower/Bathing: Unless indicated by your surgeon, you should be able to shower/bathe as normal.

Medications: After surgery, the calcium level returns to normal very quickly, and often patients have symptoms of tingling or bone pain. To help during that transition it is advisable to take an OTC Calcium/Vitamin D supplement for the first two weeks. Any medication such as Oscal D, Caltrate D or Citracal are acceptable. The recommended dose is two pills twice a day for the first week, then one pill twice a day the second week.

Pain: It is uncommon to have significant pain, and usually the pain from the breathing tube causes more pain than the surgery. You should not take any ibuprofen (Advil, Motrin) for pain



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unless you are instructed to do so. You should take Tylenol for pain, or the pain medication provided by your surgical team.

Call the Office If You Have...

1. Any concerns. We would much rather that you call your surgeon than worry at home or get into trouble.
2. Symptoms of low calcium:
 - Numbness/tingling of your hands and/or feet
 - Numbness around your lips
 - Muscle cramps in the back and legs may lead to spasms.
 - Fatigue, Irritability
 - Wheezing
 - Trouble swallowing
 - In severe cases, you may experience seizures or other uncontrolled movements.
3. Fever over 101.5 degrees F.
4. Foul smelling discharge from your incision.
5. More than expected swelling of your neck.
6. Increase warmth or redness around the incision.
7. Pain that continues to increase instead of decrease.
8. Problem urinating.

If you are experiencing bleeding or are having difficulties breathing, **you need to go directly to the emergency room without calling.**

Please note, pathology results are generally not available until 7-10 business days after your procedure. Results will be discussed in the office during your post-op visit.