



DeKalb Medical Physicians Group

Surgical Associates

THYROID & PARATHYROID POST-OPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS:

Medications:

- **SYNTHROID** - If you had a total thyroidectomy you will go home with a prescription for SYNTHROID (generic Levothyroxine), human synthetic thyroid hormone. This medication will replace the hormone usually made by a functional thyroid gland. Synthroid should be taken once daily in the morning on an empty stomach. If you miss a dose, just take the scheduled dose the next day. The final proper dosage will be determined by lab work done weeks after surgery.
- **PAIN PILLS** - You have been given a prescription for PAIN MEDICATION. Most narcotic medication is better tolerated if taken with food. Do not drive or engage in activities that require decision-making or quick movements if you are taking narcotics. If you want, you may instead take over the counter pain medications with ibuprofen (i.e., Advil or Motrin), Tylenol or Aspirin. Do not take Tylenol in addition to the prescription pain medication as it already contains Tylenol.
- **CALCIUM** – If you had a total thyroidectomy or parathyroidectomy for the first week post operatively you should take supplemental calcium- your dose will be determined by your surgery and your post operative labs. Symptoms of low calcium after thyroid surgery include numbness and tingling of fingers and around lips. It can progress to numbness in other parts of the body and also include muscle cramps and contractions. Severe cramping or problems breathing require an ED visit. Call the office with questions.

Activity: Everyone is different, so there is no set timeframe for when you will be “back to normal.” After surgery you may find that your energy level is slow to return. Rest as needed. Resume activity as you feel like it. You will not damage yourself or pull anything apart by moving around. Returning to work or usual activity is highly individualized.

Wound Care: Your stitches are all underneath the skin and will dissolve in time. Over the stitches there will be steri stripes or surgical glue. Leave this in place for 10-14 days. It is not necessary to apply any ointments or other solutions to the incision site. Should your incision site become red, painful, swollen, or if there is drainage from the incision please notify our office immediately. Some bruising or discoloration around the incision is not unexpected. After two weeks, you can apply cream to your incision to aid in healing- vitamin E gel caps work well. For patients prone to keloid scars, silicone gel stripes can help prevent the prominent scar.

Bathing: You may shower the day after your surgery. The incision and dressing can get wet; just pat the area dry.

Diet: There are no dietary restrictions. You may experience constipation from the pain medications. Drinking a lot of water, fresh fruit and prune juice can help with the constipation- if it persists milk of magnesia can be used.

Pathology Report: It usually takes the pathologist 2-3 working days to get the final tissue analysis report out. I will discuss the final report at your follow up visit.

Follow up Visit: You should already have a return office visit scheduled for after surgery. If not, please call the office to set up a post operative evaluation. It is our goal to assist you in achieving a rapid and complete recovery from your surgery. Should you have any questions or concerns please do not hesitate to call the office. After hours the answering service will get the message to me, and I will return the call. If you feel it is necessary to have more emergent medical attention of if you have a problem reaching me, please go to the Emergency Department at the hospital and I will be contacted.