

Thyroidectomy: Post-Op Instructions

Follow your doctor's recommendation for post-op office visits.

Diet

Drink fluids abundantly. Nausea and vomiting are common occurrences following surgery due to anesthesia. Keep your diet light for the first 24-48 hours. You may advance your diet as tolerated. Do not hesitate to use Tigan suppositories as prescribed.

Discomfort

Mild to moderate discomfort is normal the first few days. Use your pain medication as prescribed, anticipating less discomfort with each passing day. Avoid heavy lifting and keep activity light for two weeks following surgery. You may bathe from the neck down and should have help washing your hair over the sink for a few days following surgery.

Wound care

The stitches should be kept dry. If you have been instructed by your doctor to use Polysporin ointment, apply to stitches twice daily. If a drain is present, keep it covered with a small gauze dressing until the drain is removed. If there is no drain, the stitches may be left open to the air. They will be removed 7-10 days following surgery.

When to call:

- If severe or unusual pain develops.
- If nausea and/or vomiting persists for more than four episodes after arriving home from the hospital.
- If the wound develops redness, tenderness, drainage or swelling.
- If a temperature of 102.5 or higher develops more than 24 hours after surgery.
- If the neck swells significantly, causing tightness/bulging of skin or wound.
- If you have the sensation of breathing difficulty.
- If you have signs of hypocalcemia, or muscle spasm of the face, wrists or feet with increasing irritability.