

Post Operative Info - Parathyroid Surgery

Information for Parathyroid Surgery

Care of your wound

- Your incision will be covered by thin paper steri-strips. These need to stay in place for at least 1 week until your follow up appointment.
- It is ok to shower over this dressing. And pat it dry with a towel. It is best to avoid swimming in pools, spas or the beach whilst the dressings are intact.
- If the dressings have some dry blood on them it is ok. The blood will actually aid the healing process. If you wish you can place another steri-strip over the original.
- If the steri-strips become dirty or begin to lift after 72hrs it is ok to replace them at this stage. You may wish to approach your GP if unsure.
- Your wound will be a little swollen and even some mild bruising is normal. If you develop increasing swelling, substantial bruising or difficulty breathing you should let Dr. Green know and return to either your GP or the emergency department if you are in distress (this is very rare).

Stitches

- Your wound has been closed entirely with dissolving sutures. These will take several weeks to completely dissolve. You will not need to have any stitches removed after your surgery.

Pain Relief

- It is normal to feel some pain after your surgery especially with swallowing and moving your neck in the initial 48hrs post op. You will be given regular analgesia including paracetamol along with some stronger pain relief if required.
- It is important that you are comfortable and able to move your neck freely. DO NOT keep your neck stiff to avoid pain; this will only make it worse in the long run.

Return to work

- You will need to take some time off work. However, most people can resume normal duties (light Office type work) within 1 week of surgery. For heavy (manual labour type work) you may require an additional week.
- Dr. Green will happily provide a medical certificate for these times if you wish.

Driving

- You will NOT be able to drive for 1-week post surgery.
- After the first week you may return to driving if you have full movement in your neck and are not inhibited in anyway by discomfort on moving your neck.
- Most people can return to driving safely at the 1-week mark.

Energy levels and resuming normal activities

- It is normal to not have full energy levels after the operation.
- You should be able to perform usual light duties within 1 week of the surgery. Although it is quite normal to not regain full levels of energy for several weeks after an anaesthetic.
- Regular light exercise (walking, riding etc.) is encouraged after your surgery. A basic rule is 'if it hurts it's too strenuous and you should stop'.

Information specifically for Parathyroidectomy Surgery

Blood Tests

- Removal of the abnormal parathyroid gland will be confirmed via a blood test whilst an inpatient after your surgery.
- After discharge a repeat blood test may be arranged prior to your follow up appointment. If this is the case a Sullivan and Nicolaides request form will be given to you. The repeat blood test will need to occur the day before your follow up appointment.

Incomplete Exploration

- Overall the success rate of parathyroidectomy is greater than 90% in a single operation.
- In a small number of cases the pathology causing your high calcium can result in a parathyroid gland that is in an unusual position and not found at the first operation. It is also rarely the case that there is more than one gland causing the high calcium.
- If this is the case your post-op blood test will confirm a 'incomplete exploration'.
- Further blood test will be arranged in the coming months after your surgery to monitor the response to the remaining parathyroid gland.
- Further imaging may be required including:
 - Repeat Ultrasound.
 - Sestamibi Parathyroid Scan.
 - CT scan of your neck – 4D CT.
 - Venous sampling (only after two incomplete explorations – blood is sampled via a catheter to determine the location of the gland. This is an invasive test and only performed as a last resort.
- Whilst the abnormal gland is still being located it is important to keep well hydrated. It is recommended you drink 2 Litres of water per day. On hot days this may need to be more.

Follow Up

Dr. Green will normally see you in the Rooms 1 week after your operation. Please call 32263800 to confirm an appointment.