

## Thyroid Surgery Post-procedure Instructions

### Special Instructions

- If a drain was placed during surgery, it will typically be removed the next day. This can be done in the office if discharged the day of surgery, or at the hospital if you stay overnight.
- Some patients have a drop in their calcium levels after surgery. If this happens the patient may experience numbness or tingling involving the lips or finger tips. Contact your doctor if you develop these symptoms. A supplement of calcium and/or Vitamin D will usually suffice to eliminate such symptoms.
- You may need a thyroid hormone supplement after thyroid surgery. The timing of thyroid supplements will be discussed with your physician.
- Do not drive while taking narcotic pain medications.

### Medication

- Use prescribed narcotic pain medication as directed. You may supplement with Motrin® as needed.
- Antibiotics are not typically prescribed unless deemed necessary by your surgeon.
- If you were previously taking aspirin or other blood-thinning agents, you may restart these 3 days after the procedure unless instructed differently by your doctor.

### Activity

- Light activity until follow up visit. Do not lift more than 30 pounds during this time, but you may do some limited aerobic exercise as tolerated.
- You may shower 48 hours after surgery. If a drain was placed, you may shower 48 hours after the drain is removed.
- Most patients return to work within 1 week of surgery.

### Diet

- No restrictions.

### Postoperative Follow-up Appointment

- Usually 1 week after the procedure. Call 636.441.3100 should you need to reschedule or confirm.

### What to Expect

- You may have mild pain or even some numbness around the incision.
- Discomfort will gradually improve over the first few days and should respond to pain medication. Use ice packs over the wound as necessary.
- Mild sore throat for several days.
- Some patients may experience mild scratchy hoarse voice for up to several weeks.

### When to Call

- Call the office at 636.441.3100 during routine hours for questions, concerns or medication refill requests. Please remember that pain medications will only be refilled during regular office hours.
- After-hours and weekend calls should be limited to urgent and emergent issues such as the following:
  - Excessive bleeding, or development of discolored wound drainage
  - Adverse reactions to prescribed medications, such as rash or vomiting
  - Fever >101.4° that does not respond to Tylenol® or Motrin®
  - Numbness or tingling involving lips or fingertips
  - Muscle cramping



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- Should you choose or be instructed to go the ER for any reason, we ask that you go to either St. Joseph Hospital-Lake St. Louis or Barnes-Jewish St. Peters Hospital.