



Instructions following neck surgery

Postoperative Period

- **Mild to moderate pain is normal.** This is usually well-controlled with medication.
- **Sore throat and discomfort with swallowing** are due to general anesthesia and inflammation from the surgery itself, and usually improve within 1 week.
- **Voice hoarseness** is often the result of irritation of the vocal cords from the breathing tube inserted for procedures done under general anesthesia. If this persists, alert your surgeon.
- **Bleeding** is rare after neck surgery. If this occurs, extensive swelling of the neck can occur and may need to be drained. Notify your surgeon or go to the Emergency Room immediately.
- **A surgical drain in the wound is sometimes necessary** to prevent accumulation of fluid under the wound. Do not remove the drain unless directed by your surgeon. You will receive specific instructions if you have a drain.

Activity

You will need to rest (off work or school) for 1 week after surgery. No vigorous activity should be performed for 2 weeks. Rapid head turning should be avoided for 1-2 weeks.

Diet

General anesthesia and prescription pain medications can cause nausea. It is preferable to eat a bland, light diet for about 24 hours after your surgery. After that, a regular diet may usually be resumed. Nausea experienced after taking pain medications can worsen if they are taken on an empty stomach. It is preferable to take prescription pain medications with small amounts of food.

Wound Care

- **If you have stitches**, you should keep the area clean and dry for one week and apply antibiotic ointment to the wound twice daily. The stitches will be removed by your surgeon at your follow-up visit.
- **If your wound was sealed with a skin sealant**, you will be able to get it wet 24 hours after surgery, but should not allow the wound to soak in standing water (ie. a bath, pool or hot tub). It is not necessary to apply antibiotic ointment to a wound with skin sealant, and the coating usually peels off within 10-15 days.

Medication

You will be given a prescription pain medication. Please do not drive, operate machinery, or drink alcohol within at least 8 hours of taking this medication. You may also be given an antibiotic. Please take all medications according to the instructions indicated by your surgeon.

Follow up

We will see you in the office about 1 week after surgery to check your wound, remove any skin sutures, and to go over your pathology results. Please call the office soon after your surgery to schedule your follow-up appointment.

Leonard Piazza, MD, FACS
Rodney Caniglia, MD
Robert Kany, MD
Stephen Kraseman, MD

10 W. Martin Ave, #260
Naperville, IL 60540
(630) 355-5668