



## Ear, Nose & Throat Consultants of North Mississippi

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### Thyroidectomy Post-Operative Instructions

For 10 days prior to surgery and 7 days following surgery, do not take Aspirin or aspirin products, including Alka-Seltzer, Aspergum, Ibuprofen, Advil or Motrin. Tylenol is permitted.

Neck pain and neck stiffness are common after surgery. Your doctor will order a pain medication to help with discomfort. Avoid straining and heavy lifting for at least one week after surgery. Light to moderate activity as tolerated is okay. When resting, keep head elevated. This reduces bruising and swelling.

Start with a light meal or liquid diet on the first day after surgery and then advance to a regular diet as tolerated. Patients may notice a scratchy throat for a few days after surgery.

Some patients may experience a hoarse, whispery, or tired voice. The hoarseness is usually temporary, but in some cases, it can be prolonged.

After surgery you will have an incision which will be covered with steri-strips. We will bring you back to the office for removal of the sutures within 1-2 weeks post op. The steri-strips stay in place for 5-10 days. Do not scratch, rub or pick at the steri-strips. Do not try to pull the steri-strips off prematurely. Do not apply ointment of any type to the steri-strips. You may shower or bathe and get the strips mildly wet, but don't soak or scrub the incision. Gently blot the incision after showering. Protect the area from sun exposure for one year with a sunscreen of SPF 30 or greater. Some numbness is common. We expect this area to be more red and swollen than the surrounding skin. The incision will gradually improve in appearance over the next year.

Occasionally a drain may be left in the incision to remove fluid that can build up. The drain is typically removed on the day following surgery.

Following either a partial or total thyroidectomy, you will likely be placed on Synthroid. Synthroid is a replacement for the natural hormone your thyroid makes. You will need to have lab work done regularly until your thyroid levels become stable. T4 and TSH are the names of these tests.

If you have a complete thyroidectomy or a total thyroidectomy, in addition to thyroid levels, we will also monitor your calcium levels. Since calcium levels can fluctuate after surgery, you need to watch for symptoms of low blood calcium. These symptoms include numbness of the fingers or lips, muscle cramps, or facial twitching. If you notice any of these symptoms, notify our office.

Please contact our office at 662-234-1337 if you have any questions or if you notice any swelling, redness or bleeding from the incision or if your fever exceeds 101 degrees.