

## Medications

- Your surgeon may order an antibiotic to be taken for 7–10 days after the surgery.
- You may also receive a prescription for pain. This medication may cause drowsiness and constipation. Take the pain medication about 30–60 minutes before eating for comfort.
- To prevent constipation, eat full grain breads, bran cereals (All Bran, Bran Buds, Fruit & Fiber), fruits (prunes, raisins, dates, bananas, apples), vegetables.
- **For surgery on the tongue**, avoid aspirin (in any form) as it can increase the chance of bleeding. If you take a regular low dose of Aspirin, ask your family doctor prior to taking.

## Follow-up

- Please schedule a follow up appointment with your surgeon.

## Notify your surgeon if you develop any of the following symptoms:

- pain which is not relieved by the medication
- continuing fever
- continuing chills
- redness and/or leaking (of pus) from the incision
- more than a small amount of bleeding

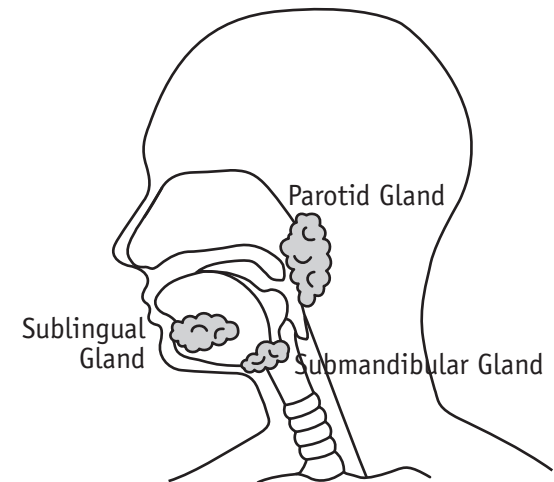
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# After Minor Head or Neck Surgery

## Post-Op Instructions

### Salivary Glands



- Partial Glossectomy
- Parotidectomy
- Submandibular glands
- Thyroglossal duct cyst removal
- Lymph nodes
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

**Partial Glossectomy** is the surgical removal of part of the tongue. Usually done to remove cancer or abnormal tissue of the tongue.

**Parotidectomy** is removal of all or part of the parotid gland. This is a large salivary gland located in front and below the ear. The most common reasons for removing all or part of this gland are a tumor, infection, or blockage of the saliva outflow, causing enlargement of the gland.

### **Thyroglossal duct cyst removal**

A thyroglossal duct cyst is a lump in the neck that develops from cells remaining after the formation of the thyroid gland before birth. It may become infected or painful.

**Submandibular glands (2)** are located under the floor of the mouth and produce saliva. Sometimes they become blocked by a stone or tumour.

**Lymph nodes** are part of the immune system. They enlarge for many reasons and may be removed in order to find the cause.

### **Diet**

Eat a bland light meal or a liquid diet on the day of the surgery. You may eat a regular diet the next day. Also, pain pills may cause nausea if taken on an empty stomach. It is better to take this medication with a piece of toast or some food.

**For surgery in the mouth**, eat a soft diet such as warm soups (**not tomato**), jelly, cooked vegetables, pasta (**not tomato**), poached eggs, ice cream, popsicles and soft bread (**no hard chewing**).

### **Pain**

After a **parotidectomy**, your ear and cheek may be numb for several months, the numbness of your earlobe may be permanent. Chewing may be uncomfortable for the first few days due to irritation of the muscle that lies under the parotid gland.

### **Activity**

Elevate the head as much as possible. Sit in a recliner or use two or three pillows when sleeping. Raising the head reduces bruising and swelling.

You can drive as soon as you feel comfortable turning your head from side to side.

**For surgery on the tongue:** For the next 2–4 weeks, avoid heavy lifting, pushing or pulling objects that weigh more than 10 pounds, such as: vacuuming, gardening, carrying groceries and picking up children.

### **Wound Care**

- You can expect a small amount of drainage for 2–3 days after surgery.
- If you cannot see any stitches, they may be inside the wound and will absorb naturally.
- You may have metal staples instead of stitches. The doctor or nurse will remove them at the follow up appointment
- ❑ **For surgery in the mouth:**
  - Use gentle mouth rinses after meals and at bedtime.  
**Use warm salt water or tap water to sooth the area and keep it clean. You can make your own salt water - ¼ teaspoon to 1 cup of water.**
  - **Avoid** mouthwash as it may irritate the area.
  - You may brush your teeth. Just be careful and gentle, especially to any raw area.
- ❑ You may have a **dressing** which you may remove in 2 days and shower.
- ❑ You may have a **drain** which the doctor or nurse will remove in 1–2 days. If the drain loses suction, you may need to open it and recharge it. There is an instruction pamphlet for care of drains. Empty the drain daily. Do not get the area wet for 24 hours after the drain is removed.
- ❑ Your **wound may be exposed**. Keep it dry for 24 hours after surgery; then you may get it wet in the shower. After bathing, dry the incision gently, and place ointment (Polysporin) on the incision line.