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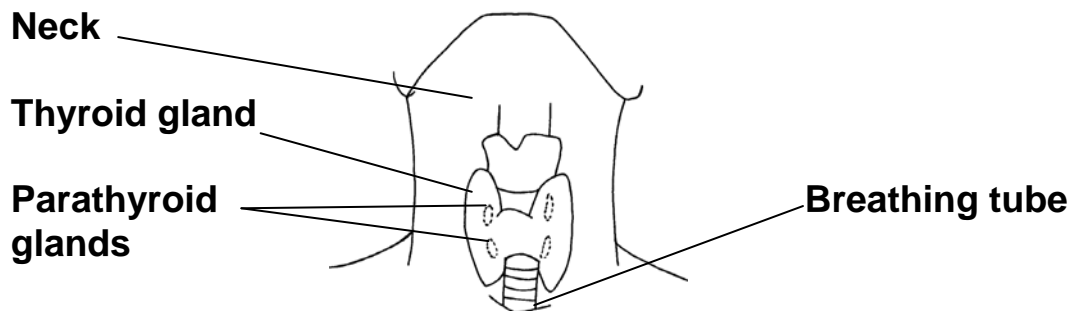
## Parathyroidectomy Surgery for Primary Hyperparathyroidism

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### What is parathyroidectomy surgery?

The parathyroid glands secrete a hormone that controls the balance of calcium in your body. You need a proper level of calcium for normal body chemistry.

Parathyroidectomy surgery is done when the calcium balance is abnormal because the parathyroid activity is too high.



The operation is done under general anaesthesia so you are asleep.

An incision is made across the lower front of the neck. The parathyroid glands, located behind the thyroid gland are found, and the abnormal one(s) removed.

After surgery, patients usually need to take calcium supplements, sometimes with Vitamin D, until the calcium balanced is restored.

### What do I need to do before surgery?

You must come to the Pre-Admission Assessment Clinic 1 to 2 weeks before surgery to have any blood work, X-rays and other tests your doctor orders. In this clinic, you will talk to a nurse and anaesthetist. You will learn how to get ready for surgery. You will have time to ask questions as well.

## **Pre-Admission Assessment Clinic Visit continued...**

Bring a list of your medications to this visit so the nurses and anaesthetist can see what you are taking.

You will also be given instructions about eating and drinking before surgery and when to stop. If you take medication each morning, the nurse or anaesthesiologist will tell you the ones to take the morning of surgery. If your doctor wants you to shave your neck at home, the nurse will talk to you about this.

## **On the Day of Surgery**

Follow the Surgery Checklist at home. Come to the hospital Day Surgery Unit at the time you were advised. The nurses will prepare you for surgery, take your blood pressure and explain things that are going to happen. A thin tube called an intravenous is put into a vein in your arm. This is used to give you fluid and medication during surgery.

After you are ready for surgery, your support person can wait with you until you for your operation.

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## **What to expect after surgery**

### **How will I feel after surgery?**

After surgery, you will go to the recovery room. You will be watched closely by the nurses until you are awake. If you feel pain or have an upset stomach, the nurse will give you medication to help.

You may go home 2 to 4 hours after surgery. Your nurse will review how to look after yourself at home after surgery.

Some patients are admitted to a nursing unit for further monitoring.

### **Calcium in your blood and taking medications**

The amount of calcium in your blood needs to be monitored closely. You will have a blood sample taken in the recovery area and as needed after that. Calcium (including Extra Strength TUMS) and Vitamin D, when needed, can be taken by mouth. Some medications may need to be given by intravenous. Before you go home, you must be able to take all medications by mouth.

## **Blood tests after discharge**

After you go home, you will have blood tests to monitor your calcium level as your doctor directs. Your doctor will tell you to adjust your medications as needed. **It is important to follow your doctor's instructions.**

## **Incisions**

You will have an incision closed with stitches or special tape called steri-strips. You may have a tube, called a drain, coming out of your incision. The drain removes fluid caused by the surgery. The nurses check and empty the drain and clean your incision. The drain is taken out by the visiting nurse when your doctor orders this.

## **Pain and other symptoms**

Your neck will be somewhat sore after surgery. This is not usually a major problem. Pain medication will be prescribed as needed. Take this medication as directed by your doctor.

Other symptoms you had from the high calcium will gradually improve.

## **Diet**

When you go home, you can follow your normal diet.

## **Activities**

You may feel tired for 1 or 2 days. You can gradually go back to all of your regular activities when you go home.

## **When do I see my doctor again?**

The nurse will give you a follow-up appointment with your doctor before you leave the hospital. **If you do not have an appointment, call your doctor to arrange this after you are home.**

**Call your doctor if you have any signs of infection:**

- increased swelling around your incisions
- redness around your incisions
- yellow or green discharge around your incisions
- increased temperature, or chills or shaking



**Call your doctor if you have:**

- pain after surgery that does not feel better each day
- any questions or concerns

**Is there anything else I should watch for?**

**Contact your doctor if you have any of these problems.  
You may need your calcium adjusted.**

**Signs of low calcium are:**

- tingling in your fingers, toes or face
- muscles cramps in hands and feet
- shaking
- convulsions



**Signs of high calcium are:**

- upset stomach or nausea
- general unwell feeling
- constipation