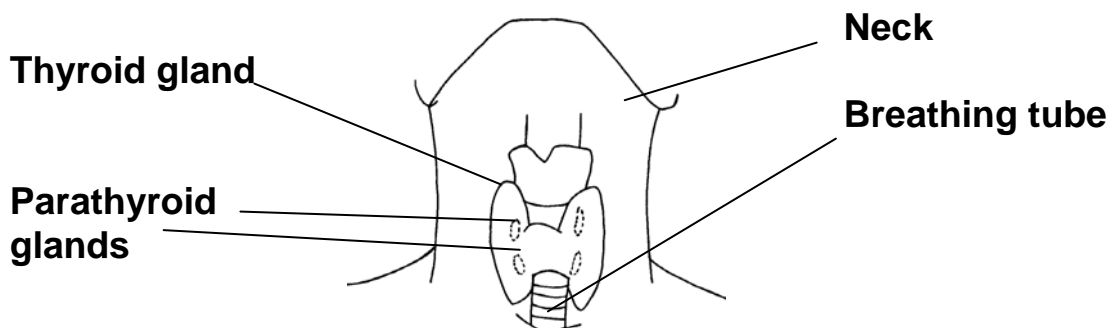

Parathyroidectomy Surgery in Secondary or Tertiary Hyperparathyroidism

What is parathyroidectomy surgery?

The parathyroid glands secrete a hormone which controls the amount of calcium and phosphorus in your body. You need a balance of calcium and phosphorus for growth and function of nerves, muscles, bones and teeth.

Parathyroidectomy surgery is done when the calcium and phosphorus in your body are not well balanced.

Secondary hyperparathyroidism is common in people with renal disease and rarely occurs in other conditions.



During an operation for secondary or tertiary hyperparathyroidism 2, 3 or all 4 of the parathyroid glands in your neck are removed. The surgeon makes an incision in the front of your neck to do this. Part or all of one gland may then be transplanted into a muscle in the neck. This transplanted gland may eventually be able to make the hormone to help balance calcium in your body.

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 anaesthesiologist. You will learn how to get ready for surgery and have your questions answered.

Bring a list of current medications and herbal products you take to the clinic so the nurses and anaesthesiologist can review these.

You cannot eat or drink anything after midnight before your surgery. If you take medication each morning, the nurse will tell you if you should take it the morning of surgery. If your doctor wants you to shave your neck at home, the nurse will show you where to shave.

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.

The Nursing Unit

You will go to a nursing unit for care and teaching after surgery.

Intravenous

After surgery, you will have a tube in your arm called an intravenous or IV. You will get a medication called calcium gluconate through your IV. The nurses will monitor the amount of fluid you get.

Calcium level

The amount of calcium you have in your blood needs to be monitored closely. You will have blood samples taken in the recovery area and at least once a day after that to check your calcium. When the level of calcium stays the same, you will begin to take calcium pills. The calcium through the IV is slowly decreased then stopped and you stay on calcium pills when you go home.

After you go home, you will have your calcium blood level done 2 to 3 times a week. 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 in the front of your neck. You may have a tube, called a drain, coming out of the 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 when there is less than 1 teaspoonful of drainage in 24 hours.

You may also have a small incision in your arm where the transplanted parathyroid gland is. It is closed with stitches and checked regularly. Your doctor will take the stitches out of the incisions during your first office visit. They may be taken out by a community nurse.

Pain

You should be able to do whatever you could before surgery. You will start to feel better and the pain you had from having high calcium will start to go away. This may take a couple of weeks.

Before you go home, you will be given a prescription for pain control medication. Take this medication as directed by your doctor.

Diet

When you go home, you can go back to the same diet you were on before surgery. You may need to take a calcium supplement and Vitamin D capsule as prescribed by your doctor.

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



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:

- numbness or tingling in your fingertips or around mouth
- muscles cramps in hands and feet
- shaking
- convulsions

Signs of high calcium are:

- upset stomach or nausea
- anorexia
- constipation