



SOUTHERN UTAH Ear, Nose and Throat

PAROTIDECTOMY and/or SUBMANDIBULAR GLAND EXCISION

What to expect:

1. The typical period of face/throat pain is about 10 to 14 days.
2. Difficulty swallowing is sometimes seen, as there is a "full" feeling in the upper throat and/or face. In general, the first few days are the worst, and then there is gradual improvement.
3. Some hoarseness can be expected for several days. This is generally due to the breathing tube (endotracheal tube) that was placed in the airway during the anesthetic procedure. The placement of the breathing tube may cause swelling of the vocal cords as a side effect.
4. There may be a drain in the wound for several days. This should produce a discharge during that period of time. The drain is removed on the first to third post-operative day, depending on how much drainage there is.
5. You should be on a post-operative antibiotic for at least a week after the operation. Call the office if you are not and get a prescription phoned in.

Diet:

1. For the first day, thin and thicker fluids are best. Solid foods should be avoided.
2. Typically starting on the second day, it is best to eat soft foods that do not require a lot of chewing and are easy to swallow. These would include mashed potatoes, scrambled eggs, milkshakes, oatmeal, etc. You can advance to a regular diet after the first two weeks as you desire.

Activity:

1. After discharge from the hospital, you should remain at home for the first week. Lifting any heavy objects (over 20 lbs.) should be avoided. Sleeping on three pillows to elevate the head above the heart is encouraged. No sports should be undertaken for at least two weeks, and for the next two weeks, limit yourself to mild exercise. No contact sports should be participated in for a month or more. Avoid getting the wound wet for the first week. Bathing is better than showering. Don't soak the wound. It is permissible to get the wound wet for short periods of time after that.
2. It would be a good idea to sleep with your head elevated above your heart for the first three to five days. This will help reduce postoperative swelling, and can be done by sleeping in a reclining chair or against the arm of a couch.
3. Leave the tape over your wound in place. Your doctor will change it after approximately 10 days.

Pain Control:

1. A pain medication will be given for the first week. Generally, a refill will be included for the second week, if needed.

Things to observe:

1. Parotidectomy includes a risk of injury to the nerves that move the face. Approximately 30 percent of patients will have some weakness of one or more of the branches. If your eye will not shut, then there is a risk of dryness to the cornea of the eye. "Gen Teal Ointment" can be obtained from a pharmacist over-the-counter and despite the blurriness, should be used whenever the eye feels dry. The eyelid may need to be taped shut at night for sleep. This operation may also cause a temporary weakness of the lower lip. This should resolve over time.
2. With submandibular gland excision we generally expect post-operative swelling of the wound over the face or jaw, but if there is increasing redness or unexpected swelling of the wound (particularly around day 4-6), then an infection may be suspected and the on-call physician should be notified.
3. Fever is usually observed in the first day or two, but should remain below 100.5° F. If your fever is higher than this, call the office or the on-call physician if it is after hours.