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## **Post Op Instruction for Parotidectomy**

### **How you will feel**

You will be drowsy and tired following surgery due to the medicines we have given you to make you comfortable. Most people wake and doze on and off during the evening after surgery. The day following surgery, you may still feel a bit tired, but you will soon regain your energy. You may move about normally without fear of disrupting your surgery. Your energy will return more rapidly if you do.

### **Discomfort**

You may have some discomfort around your incision and neck. Usually this is due to muscle soreness. We will send you home with a pain medication to help minimize this discomfort.

### **Swelling**

You may expect some swelling and discoloration around your neck if you had a neck incision. This swelling will increase overnight. To reduce swelling, you may gently apply an ice pack to the surgical incision during the first 48 hours following surgery. If possible, sleep with your head elevated on two pillows. Most of your swelling should subside over 4 to 5 days.

### **Antibiotics and Infections**

You received antibiotics in your IV prior to surgery, but will need to continue taking antibiotics as prescribed after surgery. Infections after parotid surgery is very rare, but if you notice increased redness or swelling accompanied by tenderness or fever at any time, please call us so that we may examine you. Fever up to 101.5 is common following surgery.

### **Activity**

You may resume light activity as you start to recovery from surgery. You should avoid any heavy lifting or straining for 2 weeks after surgery.

### **Diet**

There is no diet restriction after surgery.

### **Dressings**

You will have your incision closed with generally Dermabond tissue glue.

If you have a drain, you will be instructed on caring for it by the nurses at the hospital. You should record the daily output and inform your physician how much has come out when you return to the office to have it removed. It will usually be removed within a couple days after surgery.

**Numbness**

You will have some numbness around your incisions, cheek and ear. The sensation around your cheek will return within a few weeks to months. The numbness around your ear lobe may be permanent but will improve slightly over time. This does not usually pose a problem but can be aggravating.

**Facial Weakness**

We use nerve monitors and very gentle technique during your surgery. However, it is possible to have some temporary nerve weakness in your face after the surgery. Weakness around the corner of the mouth is frequent and is due to incising through the "sharing muscle" and is not a nerve injury. It is usually very mild and returns within a few weeks. It is rare to have any permanent facial weakness.

Weakness of the eye muscles can lead to the most problems with inability to close the eyelids. If you are unable to close your eyelids, you will need to take precautions to keep your eyes from drying out. This includes using artificial tears during the day, placing an eye ointment in your eye at night, and taping your eye closed at night to keep it moist. Although this is extremely rare, any permanent facial weakness can be remedied by adjunctive procedures.

**Other problems**

Other problems to look for are Frey's Syndrome. This is where you sweat along your cheek when you get hungry or eat. Hematoma or seroma is a collection of blood or fluid under the skin. This requires immediate attention and drainage to avoid further complications with healing. Keloid formation can occur in persons prone to these problems, such as dark skinned individuals. Asymmetric ear lobes can occur depending on how your incision heals.

Please call with any questions or concerns 309-585-0370.