

Thyroidectomy Education Plan

Resources for Staff

- [Mosby's Nursing Consult](#) (Thyroidectomy)

Teaching Tools (Items given to the patient)

- Thyroidectomy Education Plan

References:

- Mosby's Nursing Consult

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Always close each teaching session with the question, "What questions do you have for me?"

*This page is intended for staff use only. Do not give to the patient. This document is not a part of the permanent medical record.

Thyroidectomy

Getting Ready to Learn About a Thyroidectomy

Learning something new can be hard. It is even harder if you are not feeling well. The purpose of this education plan is for you and the staff to review this information together. Here are some good things to tell the staff:

- Who you want to learn with you. We would like to have someone who will be helping you at home learn with you.
- The best way for you to learn. Do you learn best by reading a book or pamphlet, or by doing things yourself?
- If you are not feeling well, if you are in pain or you cannot focus on learning right now.

Because this teaching is about your health, the staff may explain something more than once and give you information in “bite size” pieces over several days. If there is something you don’t understand it’s okay to ask us to explain.

What I Need to Learn About a Thyroidectomy

By the time I leave the hospital I will be able to tell the staff how:

1. I will be active.
2. I will care for my incision.
3. I will eat in order to heal.
4. I will manage my pain.
5. I will contact the doctor’s office with questions and/or problems.
6. My body has changed after the surgery.

The staff will use three questions to teach me about a Thyroidectomy:

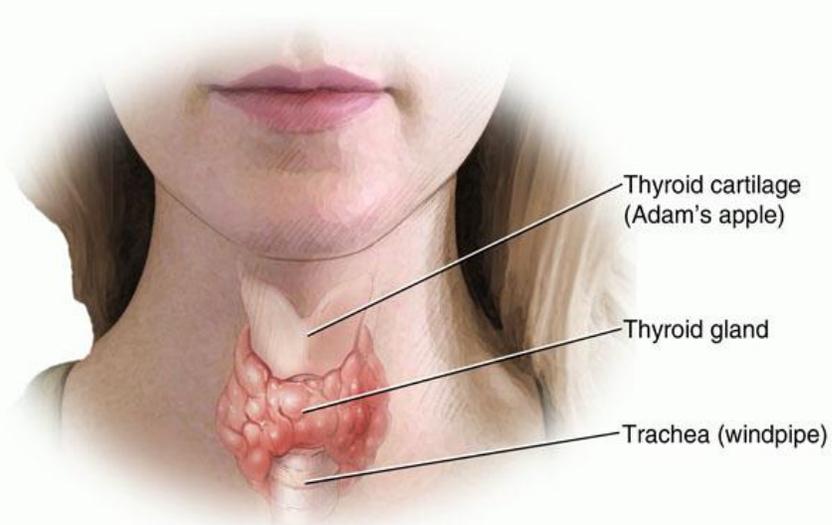
1. What is my main problem?
2. What do I need to do?
3. Why is this important to me?

The staff will ask me to repeat back important points in my own words, or ask me to show what I have learned. They want to make sure that I know about my surgery and how to take care of myself.

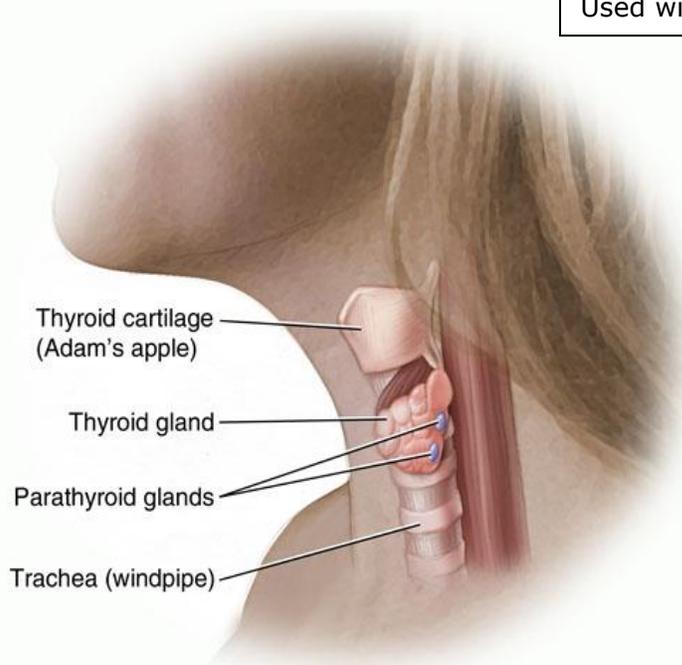
What is my main problem?

A thyroidectomy is surgical removal of all or part of the thyroid gland. I am having or have had a partial or total thyroidectomy. I will have an incision on my lower neck.

Thyroid and Parathyroid Glands



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What do I need to do?

I will be able to tell the staff how I will be active after surgery.

After surgery I will:

- Move around every 2 hours while I am awake.
- Slowly increase my walking. My doctor will decide how much I should walk.
- Not drive until my doctor says I can
- Not drive if I am taking pain pills that make me drowsy.
- Follow my doctor's instructions on how much I can lift. My doctor will tell me when I can lift more.

I will be able to tell the staff how I will care for my incision after surgery.

To care for my incision I will:

- Wash my hands before touching my incision or bandage.
- Keep the incision clean and dry. I will not take a bath or shower until my doctor says it is okay.
- Change the bandage as ordered by my doctor.
- Not use ointments, lotions or creams on or around my incision.
- Not sleep with my pets. I will keep them away from my incision and my bandage.
- Look for signs of infection:
 - Increased tenderness or pain around the incision
 - Increased swelling around incision
 - New or more drainage from the incision
 - Fever (temperature greater than 100.0° F.)
 - Increased redness around the incision

I will be able to tell the staff what I will eat to help me to heal from the surgery.

To help my incision heal, I can:

- Eat at least 2 servings of food rich in protein each day. Foods rich in protein include meats, chicken, turkey, fish, eggs, beans, peas, and peanut butter.
- Eat 3 servings of dairy foods rich in protein each day. Dairy foods that are rich in protein include yogurt, cheese and milk.
- Eat 5 servings of fruits or vegetables each day. These foods are rich in vitamins that will help my incision heal.

- ❑ To help keep my bowels working normally while I recover from surgery, I can:
 - Eat whole grain breads and cereals. Eat brown or wild rice instead of white rice.
 - Add beans, peas, or lentils to soups and casseroles.
 - Eat fresh fruits and vegetables.
 - Drink plenty of fluids. Set a goal of 6 to 8 cups a day.

I will be able to tell the staff how I will manage the pain from my surgery.

- I will take medicine my doctor ordered to manage my pain.
- I will not wait until the pain is too bad before taking my medicine. The medicine works best if I take it before the pain is too bad.
- Call my doctor if I think my medicine is not helping or if I feel I am having side effects.
- Check with my doctor or pharmacist if I have questions about my medicine.
- I will talk with the staff about how I have managed pain in the past.
 - Warm showers or baths
 - Use of cool cloths
 - Positioning with pillows
 - Relaxation techniques
 - _____
- I will take my pain medicine with crackers or food. This may keep me from having an upset stomach which may cause nausea and vomiting.
- I will not drive if I am taking pain medicine that makes me drowsy.
- Let my doctor know if I am taking aspirin or another blood thinner medicine.
- Let my doctor know if I have bruising or a lot of bleeding.

I will be able to tell the staff that I will call my doctor if I have:

- Fever greater than 100.0° F
- Increased tenderness or pain around incision site
- Increased swelling or redness around incision site
- Drainage from incision site
- Trouble breathing

- Constipation
- Tingling or muscle cramping in your face or cramping (muscle spasms) in your hands

I will be able to tell the staff about changes to my body.

- I will need to take thyroid hormone medicine for the rest of my life.

Why is this important to me?

Following these directions will help me heal and keep me safe after surgery.

As part of my care I have received this education plan.