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## Aftercare: Total Thyroidectomy or Completion Hemithyroidectomy

### What You Need:

- Pain:** A prescription will be provided for pain medication by your surgeon. This can be taken in addition to Tylenol for pain relief, as prescribed. **Do not take** non-steroidal anti-inflammatory medications (such as Ibuprofen, Advil, Naproxen, Aleve, Aspirin etc) for pain relief as this can increase your bleeding risk. **Do not drive or operate heavy machinery** while taking prescription pain medication.
- Adequate hydration/nutrition:** You may have a sore throat or a hoarse voice after surgery. You should drink plenty of fluids, and it may be helpful to take throat lozenges to relieve your symptoms. Symptoms may persist for a few days after surgery but will improve over time.
- Thyroid Replacement Hormone:** A prescription will be provided for thyroid replacement hormone. It is **extremely important** to take this as prescribed because your body is no longer creating its own thyroid hormone. Take as prescribed, typically before meals on an empty stomach.
- Calcium Replacement:** You may be provided with a prescription for calcium supplementation to keep your calcium levels adequately supported. This medication will likely be adjusted by either your surgeon or Endocrinology at a follow up appointment.

### Important Information:

**Wound Care:** Your wound is covered with Steri Strips. Steri Strips are thin adhesive strips which are placed over an incision to help it heal. Keep the Steri Strips dry for the first 24 hours, and then you may gently cleanse the area daily with mild soap and water. You should avoid scrubbing or scratching the incision site. Leave them in place until they fall off on their own or your provider tells you to remove them. They will usually fall off the skin within 10 to 14 days. Try to keep them dry as much as possible to prevent infection.

**Activity:** You may resume most of your daily activities, although **avoid heavy lifting** (greater than 10 lbs.) or strenuous activity. You can discuss when you may fully resume your daily exercise/fitness routines at your postoperative follow up appointment.

**Diet:** You may resume a regular diet, although many patients prefer to start with a clear liquid or soft diet, and then advance as tolerated. **Avoid alcohol** until your first post-operative appointment. Please take note if you have any coughing with eating or drinking and report this at your post-operative follow up appointment.

### Proceed to the Emergency Room if:

- **Any concerns, please do not hesitate to call our office.**
- More than expected swelling of your neck
- Difficulty with swallowing
- Difficulties breathing
- Tingling or numbness around the mouth or fingertips
- Muscle spasms in the hands and feet
- Fever
- Foul smelling discharge from your incision
- Increase warmth or redness around the incision
- Pain that continues to increase instead of decrease