



Imperial College Healthcare  
NHS Trust

# Hammersmith Endocrine & Thyroid —Surgery—

If you have any queries or problems following your parathyroid surgery, you should contact your surgical team via their secretary or speak to your GP

Prof Palazzo & Miss Di Marco's secretary, Annemarie:

020 3313 8542

Prof Tolley's secretary, Min:

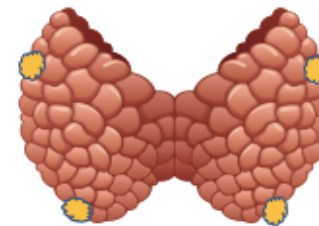
020 3312 1091

Professor Fausto Palazzo

Professor Neil Tolley

Miss. Aimee Di Marco

## Post-Operative Instructions Parathyroidectomy



**1<sup>st</sup> post-operative day/night:** It is normal to experience pain/discomfort in the front of your neck, your neck muscles and inside your throat but these will be controlled with painkilling tablets: usually paracetamol (ibuprofen and similar medications should be avoided for a week before and after).

You should remain in a semi-upright position (at approximately 45 degrees) for the first night after your operation.

You will be able to drink and eat after the operation and there are no particular restrictions as long as you are not feeling sick.

The nurses will check on you regularly – please report any concerns to them.

You will have bloods tests taken on the evening of your operation and the next morning.

**Wound care:** Your wound has been closed with hidden, dissolvable stitches and skin glue on the surface. This should be left in place for about 2 weeks. The glue is water resistant so you may shower/get it wet and then simply dab (do not rub) dry. It is normal to notice some discolouration of the glue.

After 2 weeks you can begin to massage off the glue with a using your usual moisturizer. You should start gently massaging in small circles for a minute twice per day. Increase the pressure applied as you are able to tolerate.

**Complications:** these are uncommon, include wound infection and swelling under the wound due to bleeding. The latter is more common in patients on blood-thinners. **If your wound becomes very tight suddenly, go to your nearest hospital.** If you have gradual onset/mild tightness, see your GP. If there is also redness, it is likely you have an infection and require antibiotics.

**Activities:** You should generally restrict vigorous activities for 1 to 2 weeks following your surgery. Activities which involve turning the head suddenly, such as driving should, be avoided until you are able to move your neck freely. Gentle neck exercises may be performed from day one after your operation.

**Normal symptoms:** A variety of local symptoms are common for several weeks after surgery including some tightness and swelling of the local area around the wound. Numbness of the skin above the wound may be present and may last for many months.

**Calcium Supplements:** The calcium level falls to normal very quickly after successful parathyroid surgery. Sometimes this fall is associated with symptoms such as tingling around the mouth and in the hands and, very occasionally, cramping of the hands and feet. A temporary drop in calcium levels below normal also sometimes occurs. The calcium level is checked in hospital and if it is normal, you will generally not need calcium supplements. If the calcium level is low, you will be sent home on calcium supplements. You will usually continue this until your follow-up clinic visit at which point it will be stopped/weaned. Patients who have had re-operative surgery may also require vitamin D / alfacalcidol.

**Follow up:** Generally, your follow-up will consist of

An appointment with your surgical team at 2 - 3 weeks after surgery

+/- A final surgical follow-up consult at 3 months.