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## **Post Operative Instruction THYROID SURGERY**

### **Background Information:**

- The thyroid gland is a small, butterfly shaped gland below the Adam's apple. It consists of two (2) lobes and is responsible for controlling the body's metabolism and energy level.
- A lump in the thyroid gland is called a nodule. Most nodules are benign (non-cancerous), but occasionally a nodule may be malignant (cancerous).
- Surgery is required if the nodule changes in size or interferes with breathing, swallowing, or causes an increased pressure sensation of the trachea or if there is a malignant diagnosis.
- A Thyroidectomy is a common and very successful surgery. The surgery requires approximately two (2) hours of general anesthesia. A 1-2 night hospital stay is required for post surgery monitoring and for the removal of a drain from the incision prior to discharge.

### **Common Post-Operative Expectations:**

- An incision at the base of your neck – keep the incision dry for 48 hours. When a scab has formed over the drain incision site, you may shower. Pat the incision dry and apply antibiotic ointment over the entire incision two times a day.
- Expect the possibility of a sore throat, hoarseness or both lasting approximately 1 week.
- Take your prescriptions as directed.
- Avoid wearing restrictive clothing that may irritate your incision. Covering the incision with a dressing is only necessary for the first 24-48 hours. Exposure to the air is good.
- Avoid straining and lifting items greater than 20 lbs (i.e. gym workouts etc.).
- A mild low-grade fever is normal for the first 1-3 days post operatively.
- Diet – Start with fluids and advance to a normal diet when you feel ready.

### **Call the office at 224-2353 if you experience any of the following:**

- Bleeding at the incision.
- Report any warmth, redness, swelling, increased pain or discharge from the incision site or if you develop a temperature above 101 degrees.
- Report promptly any tingling or cramping in the hands, feet or lips.
- Medication issues.
- Hoarseness that lasts longer than 3 weeks