



## Post- Operative Instructions Neck Surgery

1. There are no restrictions on diet. Eat or drink whatever feels comfortable, but you might find that clear fluids and soft foods are more easily tolerated for the first 24 hours.
2. Take your medications as directed. Narcotic medications are sometimes provided post- operatively. This type of medication often causes nausea and even vomiting. This is made worse when taken on an empty stomach, so encourage the patient to have something to drink or even better to eat prior to taking this type of medication. If vomiting cannot be controlled, please call your physician.
3. **Activity level** should be minimal for the first day. No vigorous activity/exercise should be allowed for 10 days after surgery. Do not lift anything over 20lbs and do not pick things up by bending over.
4. It is normal to have a mild to moderate amount of bruising around the incision. This will resolve slowly over time. It's also normal to have a small amount of redness around the incision, but if there is significant redness especially that increasingly moves away from the incision, please call us to let us know. A small amount of bloody to clear discharge is normal from the incision, but if this becomes pus- like, please let us know. Also, please call if there is any concerning swelling around the incision.
5. You should be applying bacitracin to the wound at least 2x/day and more often if it is dry. A moist wound heals much better than a dry, crusty one. Do not shower for 48 hours after surgery or bathe within 7 days. When showering, let the water run over the surface of the incision, do not rub it. Also when drying, lightly pat the area rather than rubbing. You may use a Q-tip and hydrogen peroxide to clean the incision if approved by your physician.
6. **Mild to moderate pain** is common after this surgery. The discomfort normally begins to subside within 2- 5 days.
7. Low- grade temperatures are not uncommon after surgery, but call your physician for a fever over 102.
8. For **best scar results**, use the bacitracin as recommended and keep the incision protected from the sun for a full year. This would be by covering with clothes if feasible or with sunblock of spf 30. Sun exposure on head or neck incisions tends to cause permanent darkening of the incision.
9. Do not take aspirin, aspirin- containing products, or those medicines which are considered NSAIDs (ibuprofen, Motrin, Advil, ketoprofen, Excedrin, etc) within 10 days of surgery because they can increase the risk of bleeding. Likewise, if you normally take blood thinning medication, do not restart this until approved by your physician. If you're not sure when this is, please contact us.
10. You should have a post- operative appointment scheduled. If you are unsure of the date or didn't have that scheduled yet, please call us.