



C O M M U N I T Y



Ear, Nose, Throat, and Allergy

## **Parathyroidectomy**

### **What is parathyroidectomy?**

A parathyroidectomy is a procedure in which the doctor removed part or all of your parathyroid glands.

### **When is it used?**

The parathyroid glands help control the levels of calcium & phosphorus in blood. Abnormal cells or cancer may change those levels. As a result, you bones may become weak. In addition, you may develop kidney stones, weakness in your muscles, decreased alertness, or stomach pain. You may just have a lump in you neck. This procedure is done when you have abnormal cells or cancer in some or all of these glands or is the glands are overactive.

An alternative is to choose not to have treatment, recognizing the risks of your condition. You should ask your doctor about these choices.

### **How do I prepare for a parathyroidectomy?**

Plan for your care & recovery after the operation. Allow for time to rest and try to find people to help you with your day – to – day duties.

Follow any instructions your doctor may give you. Eat a light meal, such as soup or salad, the night before your procedure. Do Not Eat or Drink anything after Midnight and the Morning before the procedure. Do Not even drink coffee, tea or water.

### **What will happen during the procedure?**

You will probably receive a general anesthetic. A general anesthetic will relax your muscles and make you feel as if you are in a deep sleep. It will prevent you from feeling pain during the operation.

The doctor will make a cut in your neck & expose the four parathyroid glands. If the glands are in an abnormal position, the doctor may need to explore the front of you neck to find the. To do this the doctor may make more than 1 cut. The doctor will remove glands or portions of glands depending on your condition. If the doctor suspects cancer cells in the parathyroid glands, he may remove some of the tissue surrounding the glands. The doctor will sew the cut closed.

### **What happens after the procedure?**

You may be in the hospital for about 1 or 2 days, depending on your condition. You may have a lot of swelling in you neck & find it hard to talk. If a muscle in your neck was cut, you may need a headrest until it heals. You may need to take calcium to avoid having spasms in the muscles. You will have a scar in the front of your neck.

Ask you doctor what steps you should take & when you should come back for check-up.

**What are the benefits of this procedure?**

You will no longer have the problem of abnormal cells or cancer in the parathyroid glands.

**What are the risks associated with this procedure?**

- There are some risks when you have general anesthetic. Discuss these with your doctor
- The laryngeal nerve may be injured. These nerves allow you to speak normally. If they are damaged, the damage may be temporary or permanent, & your voice may become hoarse.
- The original problem will persist if another gland elsewhere in the body is overactive.
- Your wound may bleed and require attention. It may also become infected.
- You may experience postoperative hypoparathyroidism (inadequate parathyroid function) including weakness, muscle spasm, & cardiac irregularities.
- If there was cancer, not all of it may be removed & it may grow back.

You should ask you doctor how these risks apply to you.

**When should I call the doctor?**

**CALL IMMEDIATELY IF:**

- You develop a fever.
- You have uncontrollable muscle spasms.

**CALL DURING OFFICE HOURS IF:**

- You have questions about the procedure or its results.
- You want to make another appointment.

**Pain Medications:**

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**Other Medications:**

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