

Salivary Gland Surgery (Parotidectomy)

Valley Regional Hospital

My surgery is on:

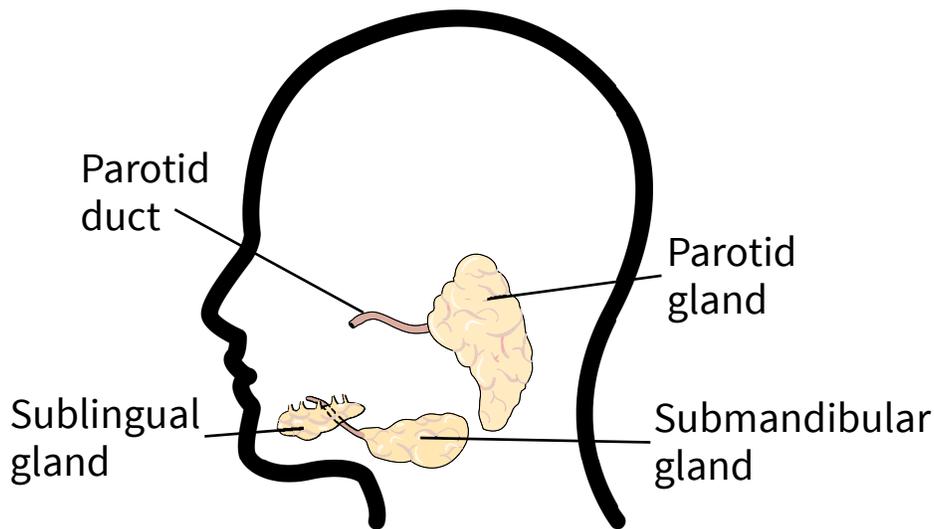
Date: _____

Time: _____

Salivary Gland Surgery

What is a parotidectomy?

- A parotidectomy is surgery to remove your parotid gland(s).
- The parotid glands are large salivary glands. They are on the sides of your face, just in front of and below your ears.
- The parotid ducts carry saliva from your parotid glands to your mouth. Saliva helps you break down food, which makes it easier to swallow.



Getting ready for surgery

- You may need tests before your surgery. This will depend on your general health and the type of surgery you are having. Staff will contact you to arrange for testing before surgery, if needed.
- **Plan to have a responsible adult drive you home and stay with you the first 48 hours (2 days) after your surgery.** This is for your safety.
- If you take medication, please talk with your surgeon before your surgery. They will tell you which medications to take before your surgery with a sip of water, and which ones to stop taking.
- Stock up on fluids like water, juice, Gatorade® or Powerade®, milkshakes, and soups.
- Have acetaminophen (Tylenol®) on hand.

For 14 days (2 weeks) before your surgery:

- **Do not** take any natural or herbal medications or products. These may cause more bleeding.



For 10 days before your surgery:

- **Do not** take ASA (acetylsalicylic acid, Aspirin®).

For 7 days (1 week) before your surgery:

- **Do not** take ibuprofen (Advil®, Motrin®).

It is OK to take acetaminophen (Tylenol®).

The night before your surgery

- **Do not** eat or drink anything after midnight the night before surgery.



The morning of your surgery

- You may take your medications as told by your surgeon with sips of water.
- You may brush your teeth.
- Follow any directions you were given at the Pre-Admissions Clinic (if you had an appointment there).
- Take off all make-up and jewelry before coming to the hospital.
- If you have long hair, pull it back with an elastic.
- We recommend that your face is clean shaven.
- Nova Scotia Health is smoke-free and scent-free. Please respect this policy. **Do not** use scented products (like perfume, after shave, scented hair spray).

Tell your surgeon if you:

- › Become sick (have diarrhea [loose, watery poop], vomiting [throwing up], nausea [upset stomach]) before your surgery
- › Have a cough, cold, or fever (temperature above 38 °C or 100.4 °F)
- Give yourself plenty of time to find parking.

Bring with you on the day of your surgery:

- Provincial health (MSI) card
- Private medical insurance card (if you have one)
- All of your medications (including prescription and over-the-counter products, inhalers, creams, eye drops, patches, herbal products, vitamins, and supplements) in their original containers
- CPAP machine (if you use one)
- A container or bag for the ride home in case you vomit

My appointment

- **Your surgery may be cancelled if you are late.**
- **If you are not able to keep your appointment, call the booking office as soon as possible:**
 - › Phone: 902-679-2657, extension 2401
- Arrive 2 hours before your scheduled surgery time or at the time your surgeon's office told you.
 - › If your surgery is scheduled for 8 a.m., please arrive by 6:15 a.m.
- **Go through the main entrance and register at Central Registration.**
- Delays in the O.R. may cause a change in your surgery time. There is a chance that your surgery may be cancelled if there is an emergency. If this happens, your surgeon's office will call you to arrange a new date.

Right after surgery

- You will have an incision (cut) on the affected side of your neck. It will be in front of your ear and down the side of your neck. This will be closed with stitches or staples that are either dissolvable (goes away on their own) or that need to be removed later.
- You may have a small drain (tube) in your neck. This is to remove any blood or fluid from under the incision. This drain is usually taken out 1 to 3 days after your surgery, but it may stay in longer if there is more drainage.
- You will have swelling on the affected side. You may also have bruising. This will go away over time.
- You may have facial weakness on the affected side. This usually goes away over time or it may be permanent. The nurse will look for facial weakness when they check your facial movements.
- If you have trouble closing your eye because of facial weakness, put a piece of tape or a bandage over your eyelid when you go to sleep. This will protect your eye so you do not scratch it while you are sleeping. This is called a **corneal abrasion** and it is very painful.
- You will have numbness around the incision and near your ear. This may go away over time or you may have it for the rest of your life. This will depend on whether the surgeon was able to save one of the sensation nerves during surgery.
- You may be given pain medication. Please ask your nurse for pain medication if you have pain, discomfort, or nausea (upset stomach).
- If you have an intravenous (I.V.) in your arm or hand, it will be removed once you are drinking well and do not have nausea.
- You can be up and moving around as soon as the drowsiness wears off. Ring for the nurse to help you get up the first time.
- You will have:
 - › Antibiotic ointment over the incision
 - or**
 - › A wrap over your whole face for 24 to 48 hours (1 to 2 days). This is to keep pressure on your face. You can take the wrap off after you leave the hospital by cutting it carefully or sliding it forward.

After discharge

Safety

- You must have a responsible adult drive you home and stay with you for 24 hours (1 day).

Controlling discomfort and pain

- Your surgeon will give you a prescription for pain medication before you leave the hospital.
 - › **Do not drink alcohol or drive a car while taking pain medication.**
 - › You can also take extra strength acetaminophen (Tylenol® Extra Strength) for pain, as needed. **Do not** take ASA (Aspirin®) or ibuprofen (Advil®).
- Take pain medication as prescribed by your surgeon.
- **Do not drink alcohol while taking pain medication.**
- Your surgeon may prescribe antibiotics (medication to help prevent infection).
 - › **If you are prescribed antibiotics, make sure you take all of the medication you are given.**

Drinking and eating

- You can drink and eat as usual right after your surgery.
- If you have too much saliva leaking from your incision, your surgeon will talk with you about what to drink and eat.
- At home, avoid foods that are hard to chew. Limit sour and spicy foods.

Activity

- **Do not strain or lift anything over 20 pounds for 21 days (3 weeks). This includes children.**
- Do more activity each day. Rest when you feel tired.
- Walk as much as you can.
- After 7 days (1 week), you may have sex as soon as you feel well enough.
- **Do not drive until you can move your head easily.** This is usually around 5 to 7 days.
- Talk with your surgeon about when you can go back to work. This is usually in about 7 days (1 week).

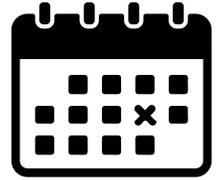


How do I care for my incision?

- We will show you how to care for your incision before you leave the hospital.
- You will need:
 - › Hydrogen peroxide
 - › Cotton swabs
 - › Antibiotic ointment (bacitracin or Polysporin® is best)
 - › Vaseline® or CytoDerma® (you can buy this at your surgeon's office)
- You will have stitches or staples over the incision. These are usually removed 7 to 10 days after your surgery if they do not dissolve (go away) on their own.
- Start cleaning your incision 1 to 2 days after your surgery.
- **To clean your incision:**
 - › Wet a cotton swab with hydrogen peroxide.
 - › Roll the cotton swab over the incision to remove any crusting.
 - › Clean your incision 2 times a day. This can help it heal and lower scarring.
 - › Put antibiotic ointment on the incision after each cleaning. Use antibiotic ointment for **up to 7 days**. Then use Vaseline® or CytoDerma®. Using Polysporin® for too long can cause problems with wound healing.
- You may have a shower or a bath after your surgery.
 - › **Do not** spray water directly on your incision until 48 hours (2 days) after your surgery. Pat the incision dry. **Do not rub**.
- You may have drainage from behind your ear. If needed, wear a dry dressing until you have your follow-up appointment with your surgeon.

Follow-up

- You will be given an appointment to see your surgeon in 7 to 10 days. Keep all of your follow-up appointments.



Call your surgeon's office if you have:

- › Fever (temperature above 38 °C or 100.4 °F)
- › More pain
- › More swelling
- › Drainage (pus) from your incision that smells bad or is yellow or green
- › Bleeding that soaks through your dressing or does not stop when you put light pressure

If you cannot reach your surgeon, go to the nearest Emergency Department right away.

This pamphlet is for educational purposes only. It is not intended to replace the advice or professional judgment of a health care provider. The information may not apply to all situations. If you have any questions, please ask your health care provider.

Find all patient education resources here:
www.nshealth.ca/patient-education-resources

Connect with a registered nurse in Nova Scotia any time:
Call 811 or visit: <https://811.novascotia.ca>

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