

# Parotidectomy

## Notes:

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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](http://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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## **Follow-up care**

You will be given an appointment to see your surgeon. If you are not given an appointment before you leave the hospital, ask a member of your health care team. Keep all appointments.

**Call your surgeon or primary health care provider if you have any of the following after leaving the hospital:**

- › More swelling
- › Fever
- › More pain
- › New weakness in your face
- › More drainage from the incision

**If you cannot reach your surgeon or primary health care provider, go to the nearest Emergency Department.**

## Activity

- **Do not strain or lift anything heavy. Do not lift anything over 5 pounds for 2 weeks. This includes children.**
- Increase your activities each day. Rest when you are tired.
- Walk as much as you can.
- You may have sex as soon as you feel well enough.
- **Do not drive until you can move your head easily.**
- Talk with your surgeon about when you can go back to work.

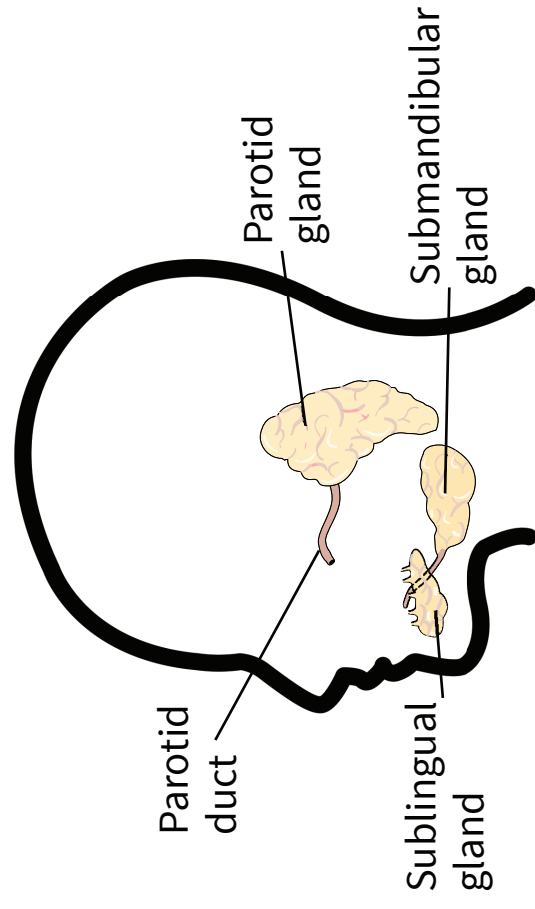
## Care of your incision

- Your nurse will go over how to care for your incision with you before you go home.
- To help with healing, put Vaseline® on your incisions 3 times a day unless your surgeon tells you otherwise.
- You may have drainage from your incision. Wear a dry dressing if needed until you see your surgeon.
- You will have stitches. They are usually removed 7 to 10 days after your surgery if they do not dissolve (disappear) on their own.

# Parotidectomy

A parotidectomy is surgery to remove your parotid gland(s).

The parotid glands are large salivary glands. They are on the side 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 your food, which makes swallowing easier.



## 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.
- A drain may be placed in your neck. This will remove any old blood from under the incision. The drain is usually taken out 24 to 48 hours (1 to 2 days) after surgery.
- You may have swelling and bruising on the affected side. This will go away over time.
- You may have facial weakness on the affected side. This will go away over time. The nurse will look for facial weakness when they check your facial movements.
- You may have numbness around the incision and near your ear. This is normal and will go away.
- You may be given pain medication. If you are uncomfortable, ask your nurse for medication.
- If you feel sick to your stomach, ask your nurse for medication to help.
- If the surgeon has not ordered medication by intravenous (I.V.), your I.V. will be removed when you are able to drink well and do not feel sick to your stomach.
- You can be up and moving around the unit as soon as the drowsiness wears off. Ring for the nurse to help you get up the first few times.

## At home

### Safety

- You must have someone take you home and stay with you for the rest of the day.
- **Do not drive until you can move your head easily.**

### Controlling discomfort

- Your surgeon will give you a prescription for pain pills before you leave the hospital.
- **Do not drink alcohol or drive a car while taking pain pills.**

### Meals

- Eating healthy food will help your incision heal.
- Follow any special diet that you are given by your dietitian.