

POST-OPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS

PAROTIDECTOMY

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What can I expect after the operation?

- The **incision** for this operation starts in front of the ear and then curves into the neck. It is hidden in skin creases where possible
- You'll have a **drain** coming out of the neck to collect excess fluid. This drain is usually removed 1-2 days after the operation
- You will be in hospital **1-2 nights**. When the drain is removed you can go home
- It is not a particularly painful operation. You will have some **numbness** over the upper neck and onto the face, as well as over the ear lobe. This generally reduces over 2-3 months after the operation. The ear lobe numbness may be permanent

What are the risks of the operation?

- General risks of any operation- bleeding, infection, presence of a scar
- Facial nerve weakness. The facial nerve controls the muscles of that half of the face. We will have discussed this extensively before the operation, as it is the biggest concern in this operation. It is not uncommon to have weakness of the nerve, particularly the branch that travels to the corner of the mouth. This is usually temporary
- Saliva leak. Some of the parotid gland will remain after the operation and this can continue to produce saliva when you eat. It may either collect under the skin or leak through the wound. Often this settles on its own but may need treatment

What should I do after leaving the hospital?

- Keep the incision dry for 72 hours. After that time you can get it wet and get soap running over it in the shower. Pat it dry with a towel
- Avoid strenuous exercise in the first two weeks after the operation
- You can recommence a normal diet immediately. It's often best to use a tea towel to apply some gentle pressure over the operation site to prevent the accumulation of saliva under the skin

What do I need to look out for when I'm at home?

- Any swelling over the region of the parotid gland or leakage of saliva through the wound should be reported to me
- Any redness over the wound that is also hot may indicate the presence of a wound infection. This is rare however
- Read the scar management information sheet available on the website: www.ForemanENT.com.au (under 'Patient Information')

When do I have follow-up?

- Your first appointment will generally be 1 week after surgery
- This appointment allows me to assess the incision, remove any sutures and also the pathology from the operation will be available for us to discuss

If you have any problems please contact me on 0413 310 971 or 7200 2539.
Please note the mobile number is **only** for use during the post-operative period



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