

POST-OPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS

SURGERY FOR A NECK LUMP/NECK DISSECTION

Andrew Foreman

Staff Specialist
Royal Adelaide Hospital

Senior Lecturer
University of Adelaide

Provider No. 262436LW
ABN 11 387 068 348

What can I expect after the operation?

- The **incision** for this operation can vary depending on the extent of the operation required. I try to 'hide' these as much as possible in existing skin creases
- You'll have a **drain** coming out of the neck to collect excess fluid. This drain is usually removed anywhere between 1 and 4 days after the operation
- You will be in hospital **1-4 nights**. When the drain is removed you can usually go home
- It is not a particularly painful operation. You will have some **numbness** over the upper neck and onto the face and possibly over the ear lobe as well. This generally resolves in 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
- Nerve weakness. There are many nerves in the neck. These include the nerve to the shoulder, the nerve that moves the corner of the mouth, the nerve that moves the tongue and the nerve that supplies sensation to the tongue. Injury to these is not common. The shoulder can sometimes be stiff after the operation
- Chyle leak. This is a milky fluid that is digested fat fluid from the stomach that drains into the veins in the lower part of the neck. If this occurs you may need a modified diet

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.

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

- Any swelling in the neck or discharge from 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
- If you have stiffness of the shoulder, let me know. Physiotherapy is very good for this and I can arrange to commence this for you
- 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



Dr Andrew Foreman
Dr Michael Switajewski
Dr Paul Varley
Dr Michael Jay

30 Flinders Street
Kent Town SA 5067
tel. 08 7200 2539
fax. 08 8363 3083
email. foreman@entsa.com
website. ForemanENT.com.au