

What is a Thyroidectomy?

A *thyroidectomy* is the surgical removal of the thyroid gland.

A *subtotal thyroidectomy* is the surgical removal of about five-sixths of the thyroid gland, usually done to correct hyperthyroidism.

Your hospital stay will vary from 1-3 days.

At Home The Night Before Surgery

1. Do not eat or drink after midnight unless otherwise advised by your doctor.
2. Take a bath or shower, including a hairwash.

In Hospital Before Surgery

1. You will have an intravenous started the morning of surgery for fluid replacement and medications.
2. You may have preoperative medications to reduce stomach secretions.

What to Expect After Surgery

- You will wake up in the recovery room.
- You will have an incision on your lower front throat with possibly a small drain to remove fluid and promote healing.
- You may have sutures or skin clips that are removed by the nurse before you go home.
- Your pain is usually controlled by pain medication injections or tablets.
- While in bed, you will need to turn carefully to support your head and avoid straining your incision.

- You will have the head of your bed elevated slightly and your neck will be supported with pillows.
- Your nurse will check your incision frequently for any bleeding.
- If you feel any throat tightness or difficulty breathing, please tell your nurse immediately.
- You will be asked to do postoperative exercises right away and will be out of bed the evening of your surgery.
- Your intravenous will be removed as soon as you are drinking well.
- You may have difficulty swallowing and have a sore throat which can be relieved with cold fluids and ice chips.
- You are usually able to have a regular diet the evening of your surgery.
- You may need blood tests to check to see whether you require any calcium supplements.

If you experience any of the following symptoms, call your doctor or clinic immediately, or report to the nearest Emergency Department:

- swollen, red or draining incision.
- excessive, increasing pain.
- feeling hot or feverish with a temperature over 38o Celsius.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to ask your doctor, nurse or any other member of the health care team.

This pamphlet was developed by the preadmission nurse clinician in consultation with the preadmission nurses, the surgical clinical resource nurses, and nursing unit staff.

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Preadmission information for

Thyroidectomy

**Burnaby Hospital
Preadmission Clinic**