

Parotidectomy - Discharge Advice

Patient information - Otolaryngology

What is a Parotidectomy?

The parotid glands are the largest salivary glands. They are found in front of the ears. Each gland is divided into two parts, a superficial and a deep lobe, by the nerve (which helps move the face) passing through the gland.

A parotidectomy operation can remove either part of the gland or the whole gland. In most operations the nerve can be preserved, but occasionally, if a malignant tumour is surrounding it, part or all of the nerve may need to be removed. Even if the nerve is preserved it may not function properly for some time, possibly weeks or even months, following the surgery, resulting in weakness of the face. This is usually temporary but, on rare occasions, can be permanent. If the facial nerve function does not return fully, there are various ways of rehabilitating facial movement. All patients experience some numbness of the lower half of the ear and skin in front of the ear following surgery. This generally improves with time but the ear lobe is almost always left numb to some degree. Your surgeon will discuss details of your operation with you.

Wound care

- Avoid getting the wound wet for at least 48 hours after surgery.
- After 48 hours, if the wound becomes damp during washing, gently dab it dry.
- You may have a tape dressing on your wound. Keep this dressing on as long as possible or remove when advised by staff.

Pain relief and antibiotics

- Paracetamol (tablets or syrup) may be used 4-6 hourly for the first 24 hours, then as required. Do not exceed the recommended dose.
- Do not use Aspirin or Disprin for pain relief as these can cause bleeding. Many medications contain Aspirin. Please check with your pharmacist.
- If you are given a prescription for antibiotics on discharge, take these until the course is completed.



If you experience any of the following:

- feel feverish; hot or cold
- increasing pain, swelling or discharge from your wound
- bleeding
- generally feeling unwell.

Please seek medical advice:

- from your GP
- or through the contact details on this pamphlet.

Follow up

It is important to attend any outpatient appointments that you receive.

You will need to have your stitches removed at an outpatient appointment.

Contact Details - Christchurch Hospital

ORL Outpatient Department

Telephone: 364 0985

Hours: Monday–Friday 8.00 am–5.00 pm

Ward 21 (Children's Ward)

Telephone: 364 0210 Extension: 89210

Adult ORL Ward

Telephone: 364 0640 and ask for ENT ward

Day Surgery Unit

Telephone: 364 4034

Hours: Monday–Friday, 7.00 am–7.00 pm

1st floor Christchurch Women's Hospital

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For more information about:

- your health and medication, go to www.healthinfo.org.nz
- hospital and specialist services, go to www.cdhb.health.nz