

GS14lite Parathyroidectomy

Expires end of December 2019

A more detailed version of this procedure specific information sheet is available. Please ask your health practitioner at Joondalup Health Campus for a copy.

Write questions or notes here:



This document will give you information about a parathyroidectomy. If you have any questions, you should ask your GP or other relevant health professional.

What are the parathyroid glands?

Most people have four parathyroid glands, which are in your neck and control the balance of calcium in your blood by making parathyroid hormone (PTH). One or more of the parathyroid glands can become overactive, causing an increase in the level of calcium. The most common symptom is bone pain.

What are the benefits of surgery?

Your symptoms should improve. You should have less risk of permanent damage to your bones, kidneys or heart.

Are there any alternatives to surgery?

Sometimes you can have medication if the calcium level is not too high or if surgery would be too dangerous because of other medical problems you may have.

What does the operation involve?

The operation is usually performed under a general anaesthetic. The operation usually takes about an hour.

Your surgeon will make a cut on your neck in the line of one of your skin creases and remove any enlarged glands (see figure 1).

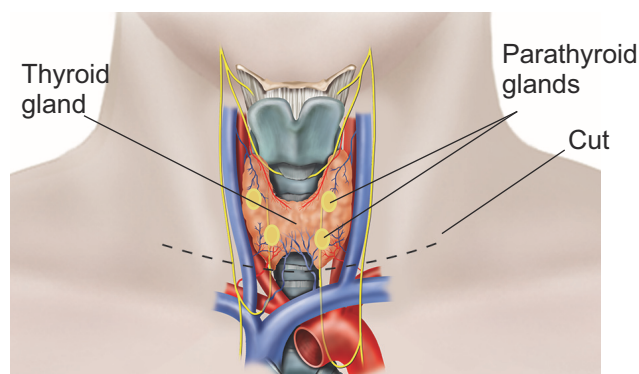


Figure 1
A parathyroidectomy

What complications can happen?

1 General complications

- Pain
- Infection of the surgical site (wound)
- Unsightly scarring
- Blood clots

2 Specific complications

- Bleeding
- Change in your voice
- Breathing difficulties
- Drop in calcium levels
- Failure of the operation

How soon will I recover?

You should be able to go home after one to two days.

You should be able to return to work and normal activities after about two weeks.

Regular exercise should help you to return to normal activities as soon as possible. Before you start exercising, ask the healthcare team or your GP for advice.

A normal gland that was not removed may become overactive in the future.

Summary

Parathyroid glands can become overactive, causing an increase in the level of calcium in your blood. Surgery to remove any affected glands is the only reliable way to prevent long-term problems.

Acknowledgements

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