



Submandibular Gland Removal

What to expect at home

Your Recovery

Submandibular Gland removal is surgery to take out a saliva gland below the lower jaw. The gland may have been removed because of infection, a tumor or a blocked saliva duct. A saliva duct is a tube that carries saliva from the gland into the mouth.

The area below your jaw may be sore for several days after your surgery. The area also may be slightly swollen or bruised. It will probably take 1-2 weeks for the cut (incision) the doctor made to heal.

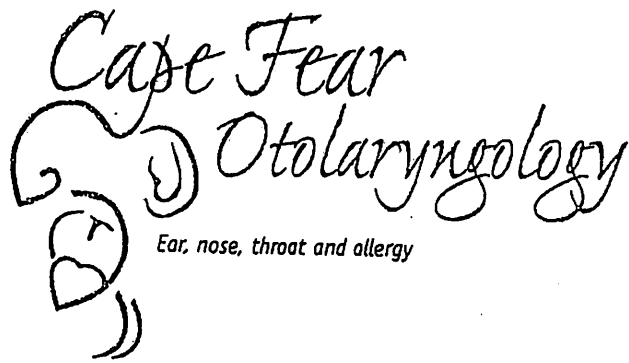
If you have stitches in your incision, your doctor may need to remove them, or they may dissolve on their own. Ask your doctor about this. If your incision was closed with glue, the glue will peel off on its own in the weeks after your surgery.

This care sheet gives you a general idea about how long it will take for you to recover. But each person recovers at a different pace. Follow the steps below to get better as quickly as possible.

How can you care for yourself at home?

Activity

- Rest when you feel tired. Getting enough sleep will help you recover. For 4-5 days after surgery, sleep with your head up by using two or three pillows. You can also try to sleep with your head up in a reclining chair.
- Try to walk each day. Start by walking a little more than you did the day before. Bit by bit, increase the amount you walk. Walking boost blood flow and helps prevent pneumonia and constipation.
- Avoid strenuous activities, such as bicycle riding, jogging, weight lifting, or aerobic exercise, for 1 week or until your doctor says it is okay.
- For 1 week, avoid lifting anything that would make you strain. This may include a child, heavy grocery bags, milk containers, a heavy briefcase or backpack, cat litter, dog food or a vacuum cleaner.
- Ask your doctor when you can drive again.
- You will probably need to take 1 week off from work. It depends on the type of work you do and how you feel.
- Do Not shave the incision for the 2 weeks or until your doctor says it is okay. It is okay to shave the rest of your neck and face.



Diet

- You can eat your normal diet. If your stomach is upset, try bland, low-fat foods like plain rice, broiled chicken, toast and yogurt.
- Drink plenty of fluids to avoid becoming dehydrated.
- You may notice that your bowel movements are not regular right after surgery. This is common. Try to avoid constipation and straining with bowel movements. You may want to take a fiber supplement every day. If you have not had a bowel movement after a couple of days, ask your doctor about taking a mild laxative.

Medicines

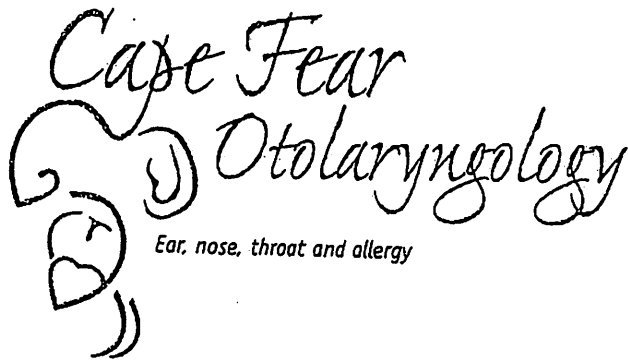
- Take your pain medication exactly as directed.
- If the doctor gave you a prescription medicine for pain, take it as prescribed.
- If you are not taking prescription pain medicine, ask your doctor if you can take over the counter medicine
- If you think your pain medicine is causing you to be sick to your stomach:
 1. Take your medicine after meals. (unless the doctor has said not to)
 2. Ask your doctor for a different pain medication
- If your doctor prescribed antibiotics, take them as directed. Do Not stop taking them just because you feel better. You need to take the full course of antibiotics.

Incision Care

- You may have a bandage over the incision. Follow the instructions from the doctors about how to take care of the bandage and when to remove it.
- If you have strips of tape on the incision, leave the tape on for a week or until it falls off.
- After the doctor says it is okay to wet the incision, wash the area daily with warm soapy water and then pat dry gently. You may cover the area with a gauze bandage if it weeps or rubs against clothing.
- Change your bandage every day.
- The doctor may give you other instructions about how to care for your incision. Follow your doctor's instructions exactly.
- Keep the area clean and dry.

Ice

- Put ice or a cold pack on the surgery site for 10 to 20 minutes at a time. Try to do this every 1 to 2 hours for the next 3 days (when you are awake) or until the swelling goes down. Put a thin cloth between the ice and your skin.



Follow-Up care is a key part of your treatment and safety.

- Be sure to make and go to all appointments and call your doctor or nurse call line if you are having problems. It is also a good idea to know your test results and keep a list of the medicines you take. 910-323-9222

When should you call for help?

Anytime you think you may need emergent care call 911. For example:

- You passed out (lost consciousness)
- You have severe trouble breathing.
- You have sudden chest pain and shortness of breath or you cough up blood.

Call the Doctor/Nurse call line or seek immediate medical care if:

- You have swelling/bruising that is getting worse.
- You are sick to your stomach or cannot keep fluids down.
- You have pain that does not get better after taking pain medicine.
- You have a fever over 38 degrees Celsius.
- You have stitches that become loose or your incision comes open.
- Bright Red blood has soaked through the bandage over your incision.
- You have signs of infection such as:
 1. Increased pain, swelling, warmth or redness
 2. Red streaks leading from the incision.
 3. Pus draining from the incision
 4. Swollen lymph nodes in your neck, armpits or groin.
 5. A fever