

## GS09lite Thyroidectomy (for Goitre)

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

### What is the thyroid gland?

The thyroid gland is a structure in your neck that produces a hormone called thyroxine, which regulates your body's metabolism. This gland can become enlarged (thyroid goitre).

### What are the benefits of surgery?

Removing the gland will improve the appearance of your neck. It will also prevent or cure breathing or swallowing difficulties.

### Are there any alternatives to surgery?

It may be possible to treat your condition with medication such as thyroxine tablets.

### What does the operation involve?

The operation is performed under a general anaesthetic and usually takes 90 minutes to two hours.

Your surgeon will make a cut on your neck in the line of one of your skin creases and remove most, or all, of the thyroid gland (see figure 1).

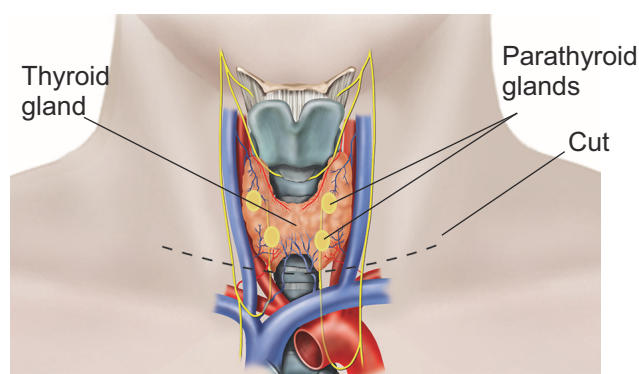


Figure 1  
A thyroidectomy

### 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
- Drop in calcium levels

- Drop in thyroid hormone levels
- Breathing difficulties

### 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.

The healthcare team will usually arrange for you to come back to the clinic. Your surgeon will discuss with you any treatment or follow-up you need.

### Summary

Thyroid goitre can cause an unsightly appearance, or affect your breathing or swallowing. A thyroidectomy to remove the thyroid gland is sometimes recommended to treat this condition.

### Acknowledgements

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