

GS08lite Thyroidectomy (for Nodule)

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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 abnormal and develop a lump (nodule).

What are the benefits of surgery?

You will no longer have the lump in your thyroid gland. If the lump is getting larger, surgery may help to prevent an unsightly appearance and should improve any symptoms caused by the swelling.

Are there any alternatives to surgery?

Surgery is recommended so that your doctor can be sure about what is causing the lump.

What does the operation involve?

The operation is performed under a general anaesthetic and 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 part, or all, of the thyroid gland (see figure 1).

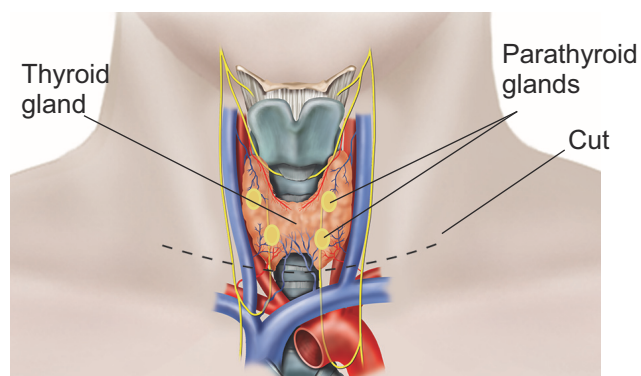


Figure 1
A thyroidectomy

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

A thyroid lump can cause an unsightly appearance or discomfort, or affect your breathing or swallowing. A thyroidectomy to remove the lump should improve your symptoms and help find out what is causing the lump.

Acknowledgements

Author: Mr Keith Rigg FRCS MD
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