Head and Neck
Discharge Instructions: Excisional Cervical Lymph Node Biopsy

What To Expect

- You may have a sore throat after the procedure because of the breathing tube used during surgery. This will go away over the next few days.

Wound Care

- You may have a Jackson Pratt (JP) drain in your neck to drain excess fluid. It should be stripped and emptied for measurement 2 times a day. Please keep a record of the drainage amount.
- You may have Dermabond® (skin glue) over the incision. This will start to peel off after a 4-5 days. Do not peel this off yourself.
- It is normal to have a small amount of oozing from the incision site for the first 1-2 days. You may ooze reddish-colored fluid, especially if you take a blood thinner like aspirin, warfarin, or Xarelto™, but you should not have fresh bleeding like you’d see with a deep cut.
- You may shower 24 hours after the surgery. Try to keep water from saturating the drain or incision.

Pain Control

- We will provide you with a prescription for opioid pain medication such as hydrocodone with acetaminophen (Norco®), oxycodone with acetaminophen (Percocet®), or oxycodone (Oxycontin®). Take it every 4-6 hours if you need it, but you don’t have to use them if you are not having pain. If opioid medications are too strong, you can take acetaminophen (Tylenol®). You may take ibuprofen (Advil®/Motrin®) after the first 1-2 days. Follow the instructions on the bottle.
- If you take an opioid medication that contains acetaminophen, do not take additional acetaminophen. The maximum daily dose of acetaminophen is 4000 milligrams. Check all medication labels. Acetaminophen may be an ingredient in over-the-counter and prescription medications.

Recovery

- The area where you had surgery will be sore for several days.
- You may be hoarse or have a sore throat for a few days.
- Do not lift anything that weighs more than 5 pounds and no strenuous activities for 3 weeks.
- Do not drive (or operate heavy machinery) if you are taking opioid pain medication.
- You can gradually return to your normal activities after 2 weeks, as tolerated.

Call Us If...

- you experience bleeding that does not stop after you put pressure on the area
- you develop severe, uncontrolled pain at the site of your surgery
- the area around the incision or biopsy site becomes inflamed or reddened
- you have a fever of 100.5°F (38°C) or higher

Call the Head and Neck Center at 716-845-8186. The center is open Monday – Friday, 8am – 5 pm. After hours, your call will be answered by our Call Center. You can also call Roswell Park 24/7 at 716-845-2300.