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EXCISION OF THE SUBMAXILLARY (SUBMANDIBULAR) GLAND

WHAT IS THE SUBMAXILLARY GLAND?

The submaxillary gland is part of the salivary gland system. This is what makes your mouth moist and watery when you eat. The system is fairly extensive with four major salivary glands. Having one removed will not cause any problems with your ability to eat or taste.

WHY DO I NEED THIS SURGERY?

The reason for removal of the submaxillary gland, otherwise known as the submandibular gland, is usually performed when the gland becomes damaged. The reason for the damage may result after a stone in the Wharton's duct. Chronic infection can also cause damage as well as cancerous changes in the gland. A definitive diagnosis can be made by removing the gland.

WHAT HAPPENS DURING SURGERY?

This procedure is done under general anesthesia. The surgery usually takes about two hours. An incision is made on the side of the neck, taking care to minimize postoperative scarring.

WHAT TO EXPECT AFTER SURGERY?

After surgery, you may be discharged on the same day. The surgeon will visit with you after the surgery and then you will be discharged. A followup appointment will be made either three or seven days postoperatively, depending on whether a drain was left in the neck area. The appointment time will be discussed with your family after the procedure.

You may eat solid food after the surgery.

You are encouraged to take up to 14 days for a full recovery prior to returning to work after this procedure.

WHAT ARE POSSIBLE RISKS AND COMPLICATIONS OF THE SURGERY?

Upon entering the neck, care will be taken to avoid nerves found in this area. One of these is the facial nerve, which causes the movement of the corner of the lower lip. This nerve is positioned differently in each patient, and therefore it is difficult to anticipate the location upon making the initial incision. Extreme care is taken to avoid this type of injury. The hypoglossal nerve, which moves the tongue, is also located in this area. Another nerve, which provides the sensation to half of the tongue, can also be injured during removal of this gland. Paralysis of the tongue or loss of sensation is rather unusual, but can occur. The percentage is extremely small, however, approximately 2-3 percent.

Another common complication is Frye Syndrome. This is caused by the nerve from the spit gland regenerating and it may grow into the facial skin, resulting in a sweating sensation after salivation. The risk of this complication is extremely low, approximately 2-3 percent.

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If you have any further questions after having carefully read the above information, please feel free to discuss it with me in your preoperative evaluation, prior to any surgery. Remember, there are no dumb questions! We want you to be fully informed and comfortable prior to your surgery.

IT IS MANDATORY TO BRING A FAMILY MEMBER OR FRIEND WITH YOU TO THE PREOPERATIVE VISIT. THIS IS BECAUSE PATIENTS, AFTER THE SURGERY, DUE TO THE GENERAL ANESTHESIA MAY FORGET THE INFORMATION PROVIDED TO THEM BEFORE THE SURGERY.

PLEASE SIGN AND RETURN THIS FORM TO OUR OFFICE WHEN YOU COME FOR YOUR PREOPERATIVE VISIT.

Please feel free to contact our office with any questions you might have at 714-441-0133.

Respectfully yours,

JAMES J. LEE, M.D., F.A.C.S.

I understand the above information and consent to the surgery.

Patient Signature

Patient Name-Printed

Date