



Dr. *Francis* T. Hall

EAR, NOSE, THROAT, HEAD & NECK

Thyroglossal duct cyst excision care

A thyroglossal duct cyst lies in the midline under the chin. It is a remnant of the thyroid gland. When we are still inside our mother, the thyroid starts developing in the back of the tongue and descends into the lower neck. Sometimes a remnant can be left behind in the midline of the neck under the chin. This remnant is called a thyroglossal duct cyst and can become infected and swollen. If this happens it is best to remove the remnant along with the middle portion of the hyoid bone. This operation is called excision thyroglossal duct cyst. Another name for this operation is the Sistrunk procedure. The hyoid bone is a small bone that lies above the larynx (voice box) and below the chin.

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 feel better as quickly as possible.

How can you care for yourself at home?

What to expect

- There is an incision lying in a skin crease under the chin.
- You will go home either the same day or stay one night in hospital.
- You may have a small drain (plastic tube) in your neck which will be removed 1-2 days after your surgery. The drain will be removed either while you are in hospital or you may come back a few days later to have the drain removed.
- It is common for the skin above and below the incision to be numb after the operation. This usually improves a lot over the subsequent 2-6 months.
- It is usual to feel tired after surgery. Some of this tiredness is due to the operation and some is due to the general anaesthetic. Rest up, get some light daily exercise and the tiredness will quickly resolve.

Activity:

- Do not drive in the 24 hours following your surgery.
- Dr Hall recommends taking 1-2 weeks off work following excision of your thyroglossal duct cyst.
- Rest when you feel tired. Getting enough sleep will help you recover.
- Walk each day. Start by walking a little more than you did the day before. Bit by bit, increase the amount you walk.
- In order to reduce the chance of bleeding, avoid strenuous activities, such as bicycle riding, jogging, weight lifting, or aerobic exercise, for 1-2 weeks.
- Refrain from heavy lifting (greater than 7kg) in the first 2 weeks following surgery.

Diet:

- Resume your regular diet, there are no dietary restrictions.

Shower/ bathing:

- Please keep the incision dry and shower from the neck down for the first two days after surgery. You may shower or bath as usual two days after the drain is removed.

Pain medicines:

- The pain is usually mild to moderate.
- It often hurts to swallow, especially in the first few days after your operation.
- Take pain medicines exactly as directed (Dr Hall will prescribe).
- If you think your pain medicine is making you sick to your stomach:
 - Take your pain medicine after meals (unless Dr Hall has told you not to).
 - Ask Dr Hall for a different pain medicine.

Incision care:

- Your wound is covered with Steri Strips. Steri Strips are thin adhesive strips which are placed over your incision to help it heal. You should avoid scrubbing or rubbing the incision site. Leave the Steri Strips in place until they fall off on their own. They will usually fall off the skin within 10 to 14 days. Try to keep them dry as much as possible to prevent infection.
- Your stitches are below the skin (subcuticular) and are dissolvable.
- Keep your incision dry until two days after your drain is removed. Two days after the drain is removed you can get the incision wet. Remember to pat the incision dry after you shower and not to rub the incision.
- Keep sun off your wound for 6 months. This avoids the wound going a dark colour (post inflammatory hyperpigmentation). There are three ways to keep the sun off the wound: wear clothing that covers the area, use sunblock or simply cover the wound with tape. Dr Hall recommends ½ inch light brown micropore tape (a 3M product). You can buy this product from most pharmacies.

Problems:

- Sometimes the wound can become swollen or infected. If your wound becomes more swollen or if it becomes more sore, call Dr Hall on 021 733 677.

When do I get my results?

- Usually, the pathologist sends a typed signed report to Dr Hall about one to two weeks after the surgery.
- Occasionally it may take the pathologist longer to issue a report either because of the complexity of your case or because of a higher than usual workload. Dr Hall will contact you by phone or text once he receives the pathologist's report in his inbox.

Follow up appointment:

- Dr Hall usually sees his patients about 2-3 weeks after excision of a thyroglossal duct cyst. His secretary Rebecca will arrange your follow up appointment for you. If you have not heard from Rebecca within one week of your surgery, please contact her on 09 281 2963.

Things to look out for:

- If the wound becomes more swollen call Dr Francis Hall on 021 733 677.
- If your incision is getting more sore or redder over a few days call Dr Hall.

Any problems call or text Dr Francis Hall on 021 733 677

Dr.  T. Hall