

## **STYLOHYOID LIGAMENT RESECTION (EAGLES SYNDROME)**

These instructions should be carefully read and followed. They are designed to answer the most commonly asked questions regarding post-operative care. We hope this information will help you during the post-operative period. Remember to call us if you have any questions, as our concern is to give the best possible care.

### **AFTERCARE**

The recovery from a resection of the stylohyoid ligament is remarkably rapid, predictable and simple. Despite the fairly routine aftercare instructions, each person is unique and as such is their postoperative experience. In the following, we offer a brief overview of the typical postoperative course.

### **WHEN YOU WAKE FROM SURGERY**

A formal head dressing will be present when you awake from your surgical procedure. In addition to the head dressing a plastic drainage tube may be placed depending on the extent of your surgery.

#### **POSTOPERATIVE DAY 1**

If you have a drainage tube it will be removed the first day after surgery. At this time the surgical site will be inspected by Dr. Osborne and Dr. Hamilton. Most patients who travel can fly home the same day the drainage tube is removed.

#### **POSTOPERATIVE DAY 2**

The head dressing will be removed on the second day after surgery. This dressing can be removed by anyone. If you have ever unwrapped a gift you are qualified to remove this dressing. The majority of our patients are back in the comfort of their own home when this dressing is removed.

#### **POSTOPERATIVE DAYS 3 – 5**

After the head dressing is removed the surgical site will be open to the air. It is not necessary to cover the incision. During this time period the incision should be kept dry. Twice a day a thin coat of an over-the-counter topical antibiotic ointment such as Neosporin or Polysporin should be applied.

#### **POSTOPERATIVE DAYS 5 – 7**

Between day 5 and day 7 after surgery, the sutures should be removed. The sutures are put in using a simple running technique. These are removed by just cutting and pulling. Steri-strips may be applied afterwards if desired.

As with removing the dressing, removing the sutures does not require a medical degree, however, most patients do have a local healthcare provider remove the sutures.

## SHORT TERM WOUND CARE

### ACTIVITY

The First Week: Limit your activity over the first week following surgery. You may carefully wash your face with mild soap (Neutrogena) and a clean washcloth, or cotton balls. **Avoid the incision site.**

Washing your hair is permitted 72 hours (3 days) after surgery. Avoid wetting or irritating any of the incision lines. Keep them from crusting with a light coating of prescribed ointment or pure petroleum jelly.

You may slowly resume your activities after the first week. Let your body tell you how much to do. Light exercise may be resumed in 4-6 weeks. Build up to this level **slowly**. You may begin by walking or other similar light exercise. In any event, do not strain, grimace or do anything of sufficient exertion to cause your pulse rate to sharply increase. Avoid excess sunlight. Even mild sunburn may cause prolonged swelling or irritation of the healing incisions. Do not compare your progress with that of other patients. Remember that everyone heals in his/her/their own unique way. Also if you have any questions or concerns, call us. Your family and friends mean well, but we can provide better information.

Additionally, avoid unnecessary bending at the waist and pricking up heavy objects that weigh more than 20lbs. When you rest or sleep, keep your head elevated on 2-3 pillows. Smoking should be avoided as it interferes with and slows down subsequent healing. If you cannot completely stop smoking, cut back to a minimum. Alcohol consumption should also be limited. If oral antibiotics have been prescribed nausea may occasionally be related to the above medications. Small amounts of clear fluids (7-Up or ginger ale) at frequent intervals may help. If this is not effective, call us. (310) 657-0123.

### MEDICATIONS

Avoid medications that contain aspirin or Ibuprofen for 2-3 weeks. Both pain and sleep medications are prescribed. Take them only as needed. After the first 24 hours Extra Strength Tylenol may be sufficient. Remember, pain and sleep medications may impair your reactions, so avoid driving or other hazardous activities for 24 hours after taking them. If the prescribed medications do not control your symptoms, please call us.

You will go home with oral antibiotics and pain medication. Most patients only use the pain medication for the first 24 hours and then only require Tylenol or Motrin.

### WOUND CARE

Incisions take approximately 6 weeks to heal. Initially during the first 6 weeks scar creams should be used to hasten the initial healing. After this time sunscreens are worn daily for at least one year directly on the incision site to prevent hyper-pigmentation or prolonged redness.

**Dr. Osborne and Dr. Hamilton as well as the entire OHNSG staff will remain available to you indefinitely. If you have any questions after office hours, please call (310) 657-0123 and follow the instructions to page the surgeon on call.**

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