

Parotidectomy

The parotid gland is one of the largest pairs of salivary glands that lie inside the cheek, just below and in front of the ear.

The parotid gland is one of the major salivary glands which supply the mouth with saliva. Saliva is a substance that aids in the initial digestion by moistening and lubricating food and permits comfortable swallowing after the food has been chewed. A lump in the area around the front of an ear that appeared slowly and very likely painlessly was perhaps one of your first signs or symptoms. Another symptom could have been partial facial paralysis or a weakness on the side of the mass. The surgery you are having is called a *Parotidectomy*, which means the removal of part or all of the parotid glands.

Do not eat or drink anything after midnight the night before surgery. If you are taking daily medication, notify the doctor and he will advise you whether or not to take it the morning of surgery.

What to expect after surgery

- You can expect an overnight stay in the hospital.
- You will have an incision on the outside of your cheek.
- A drain may be situated under the jaw to remove fluid from the wound and prevent excess swelling.
- You are likely to have swelling on the operative side which will make chewing difficult.
- Your diet will consist of liquids and soft foods at first because of the chewing discomfort. This discomfort will lessen with time.
- Avoid strenuous activities for 2-3 weeks after surgery.
- You may return to work as directed by your physician.
- Drink plenty of liquids after surgery.

Post-op complications include, but are not limited to:

- Bleeding
- Scarring
- Infection
- Saliva fluid collection
- Tear and sweat changes
- Facial nerve weakness and/or injury that can result in permanent loss of facial movement.

Notify the physician if:

- Fever is above 101 degrees
- Excessive bleeding or drainage from wound.
- Wound does not seem to be healing.
- Severe and excessive pain not relieved by medication.