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Post OP Sublingual Gland Excision

What is the sublingual gland?

The sublingual gland is a salivary gland about the size of an almond that lies underneath the tongue in the floor of your mouth. Saliva drains from it through a number of small tubes that open on the inside of the mouth underneath the tongue. The most common reason for removing a sublingual gland is as a result of a blockage to these drainage tubes. This can lead to a swelling (ranula).

What does the operation involve?

The sublingual gland is removed under a general anesthetic, so you are put to sleep completely. The operation involves making a cut underneath the tongue on the inside of the lower teeth. Once the gland has been removed the incision is held together again with stitches. These are usually dissolvable but may take several weeks to disappear.

Activity restrictions

- It is usually advisable to take a week off work to recover from the surgery.
- Avoid strenuous activity. No heavy lifting or physical exercise.

Diet restrictions after surgery

- You will need to be on a liquid or soft diet until you return to see the surgeon for your post op visit.
- Cold liquids are recommended. Ice pops, Italian ice, water, gatorade, iced tea, etc.
- Soft foods include, macaroni and cheese, noodles, rice, yogurt, ice cream, smoothies, mashed potatoes, etc. (Foods you don't have to chew)

Your physician will send in 2 prescriptions for you. One will be your pain medication and the Second one will be an antibiotic. Please pick these medications up the week of your surgery prior to your surgery.

Possible complications

- Bleeding from the wound is unlikely to be a problem. If it occurs it usually does so within the first 12 hours of surgery.

- Infection is uncommon but if your surgeon thinks it may happen to you a short course of antibiotics will be arranged.
- Numbness of the tongue - the lingual nerve which supplies feeling to the side of the tongue can become bruised as a result of surgery. If this occurs you will experience a tingly or numb feeling in the tongue, similar to the sensation after having an injection at the dentist. This numbness may take several months to disappear and in a minority of patients may last forever.

When should I call my doctor

- If you have increased redness, swelling or bruising.
- If you have persistent bleeding.
- If you have increased pain or tenderness in your upper or lower jaw
- If you have an oral temperature over 101 degrees. Check to make sure they are getting enough liquids. Dehydration can cause the body temperature to rise.