

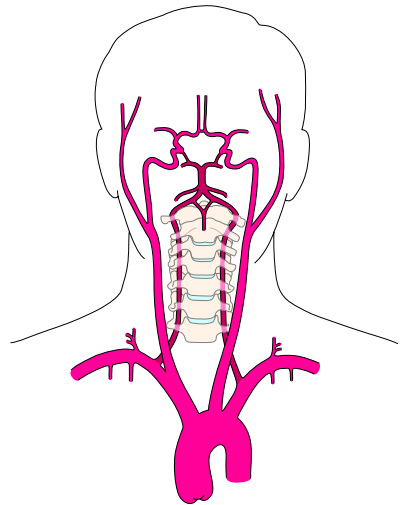
Carotid Endarterectomy

Carotid Endarterectomy

Your surgeon has arranged for you to have surgery on your carotid artery. The surgery and why it is needed have been discussed with you. You will be given a booklet that describes what will happen before your surgery. We would like to give you some more information so that you will know what to expect and how you can take part in your care.

The carotid arteries and your brain

The arteries carry blood rich in oxygen to the tissues. The carotid arteries supply blood to the arteries in the brain. Fat and other deposits can collect in the wall of the artery. This causes the artery to narrow and decrease the blood flow. Age, smoking, diabetes and high blood pressure increase your chances of have this problem. “Little strokes” are a warning sign of a problem. This can often be treated to prevent a more serious stroke.



Your doctor may have suggested surgery to decrease the chance of a stroke. Your doctor will talk about any risks of surgery with you.

Before Your Operation

Please read *Same Day Surgery Admission* to learn what will happen during this time.

Surgery

A short incision is made just below the jaw. The deposits are removed so the blood can flow freely through the artery.

During the procedure, do not move or speak unless told to do so.

After Your Operation

You will be taken to a special recovery area. Your breathing, pulse and blood pressure will be checked often. When you are fully awake and stable, you will be taken to your hospital room.

Intravenous and Food

- You will have a small plastic tube (intravenous or IV) in your arm. This will give you liquids, salts and some sugar. You will have an intravenous until you are drinking well.
- You can usually eat your regular meals the day after your operation.

Care of your incision

- You will probably have Steri-Strips™, (small strips of tape) on your incision.
- Your neck will be swollen for a few days. This is normal.

Controlling soreness/pain

- It is normal to have pain after your surgery. Pain medication will be given by pills or needle as needed.
- You may have pain medication every 3 or 4 hours.

Other

- Your bowels may not move for a few days after surgery. This is normal. Ask for a laxative if needed.
- The nurse will be checking your handgrips, eyes and ability to speak clearly as well as your blood pressure and pulse.
- Your hospital stay will be from 2 to 5 days.

At Home

Meals and snacks

- Eating healthy meals will help you regain your strength.



- Remember that you do not need a bowel movement everyday to be healthy.

Care of your incision

- You may shower 2 days after your surgery. Tape Saran Wrap™ over your incision to keep it dry.
- The Steri-Strips™, are usually removed by soaking them off 7 - 10 days after surgery.

Controlling soreness/pain

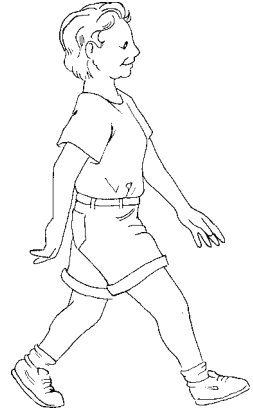
- You may take pills for pain or soreness for a short period of time. Take the pills as instructed.
- Do not drink alcohol while you are taking pain pills.
- Watch out for constipation. Ask your doctor about using stool softeners or laxatives if you need them.



Activity

- Stay quiet for the first few days at home. Gradually increase your activity.
- Some examples of good activities for you are: light housework, preparing small meals and riding as a passenger in a car for a short distance.
- Walking is the best exercise for you at this time. Start slowly and increase the distance each day.

- Resume sexual activity when you feel well enough.
- Do not drive a car for 2 weeks. Do not drive if you are taking pain pills.



Follow-up care

A visit will be booked with your surgeon. It is usually about 6 weeks after you leave the hospital. It is very important that you keep this appointment.

Returning to work

Your general health, recovery and type of work will determine when you can return to work. Discuss this with your doctor.

Call your doctor if you have:

- fever and chills
- increased redness, swelling, or warmth around the incision
- increased pain or tenderness around the incision
- separation of the edges of the incision
- drainage from the incision

Reducing Your Risk Factors

Decide now to make changes in your lifestyle to slow or stop the fatty buildup in your arteries.

- If you are a smoker, stop smoking. Avoid second hand smoke. Smoking narrows your blood vessels. It cause further damage to your arteries by causing them to narrow.
- Control high blood pressure (hypertension) and diabetes
- Eat a heart healthy diet (low in salt and fat). If needed, the dietitian will instruct you.
- Keep a healthy weight.
- Exercise regularly
- Manage stress
- Drink alcohol wisely.



Take your medication as prescribed by your doctor.

**If you have any questions, do not hesitate to ask.
We are here to help you.**

The QEII promotes a smoke-free and scent-free environment.

Please do not use perfumed products. *Thank you!*

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