

What to do and expect when you go home

- Eat regular food. Remember your sore throat will improve within several days.
- Resume your normal activities when you feel ready. Be active!
- It is normal to feel tired and groggy for the first few days after surgery. The amount of time for recovery varies for each patient. Return to work when you feel ready. Most patients take 3-7 days off from work.
- There are no activity or lifting restrictions after surgery.
- You may drive when you feel like you have good range of motion of the neck to be a good defensive driver.
- You may shower 24 hours after surgery. It is okay for water, shampoo, and soap to run over the top of the steri-strips. Do not scrub or rub the steri-strips. When you get out of the shower, pat the steri-strips dry with a towel.
- No swimming or soaking the incision underwater for 1 week after surgery.
- Do not remove or pick at the steri-strips. Dr. Kroeker will remove these in the office when she sees you for your follow-up visit.
- You may take over-the-counter Tylenol and Ibuprofen as needed at home for any discomfort you may have. Using an ice pack directly on the incision as needed can provide some relief during the first few days at home.
- If you had a total thyroidectomy, continue to take name-brand Synthroid (thyroid hormone) as prescribed.
- If you required calcium carbonate (Os-Cal, Caltrate, Tums, etc.) and vitamin D (rocaltrol/calcitriol) in the hospital, continue to take this as directed by Dr. Kroeker at home. If at all possible, do not take calcium at the same time as Synthroid, as calcium will interfere with the absorption of Synthroid.
- It is normal to have minor swelling around and under the incision site. This will disappear in the next 3-6 months.
- Call Dr. Kroeker's office to make a one week follow-up appointment.
- Call Dr. Kroeker's office or go to the nearest ER if you have any of the following:
 - persistent numbness or tingling around the lips/mouth or of the fingers/toes
 - redness/increased swelling/increased pain around the incision site
 - pain/redness/swelling in your leg
 - stabbing chest pain
 - difficulty breathing

- shortness of breath, chest pain