



Central West Specialists

Ear, Nose & Throat Specialist

REMOVAL OF SUBMANDIBULAR GLAND

The submandibular gland makes saliva for the mouth. There is one either side of the neck just under the jaw line. This gland is usually removed because it is forming stones which block the gland and make it swollen and very painful.

This operation is performed with a general anaesthetic. It takes approximately one hour. The gland and the stone are usually removed together as the stone is usually close to the gland itself. After the operation there is a small stitched wound which takes approximately one week to ten days to heal. There is a drain in the wound overnight to stop the recollection of old blood.

This operation therefore requires an overnight stay in hospital.

Possible Problems

There are several important nerves in this area. The most important are those that supply the tongue muscle on that side and the nerve that supplies sensation to that side. These run close to the gland but are rarely damaged. There is also a nerve that supplies the muscles to the lower lip on this side. If this nerve is stretched during the procedure it can lead to a weakness of these muscles which may be noticeable. The nerve may improve but sometimes it has been damaged. The nerve is very fine and difficult to see.

Infection can also occur after this operation because the gland often has a low grade infection in any case. This can be treated with antibiotics. This is rare. The wound in the neck is done in the skin crease and is quite prominent for approximately six to twelve months as a red line. As time goes by however, the scar fades and it is usually not visible within twelve to eighteen months of surgery or is only just visible as a very fine white line.

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