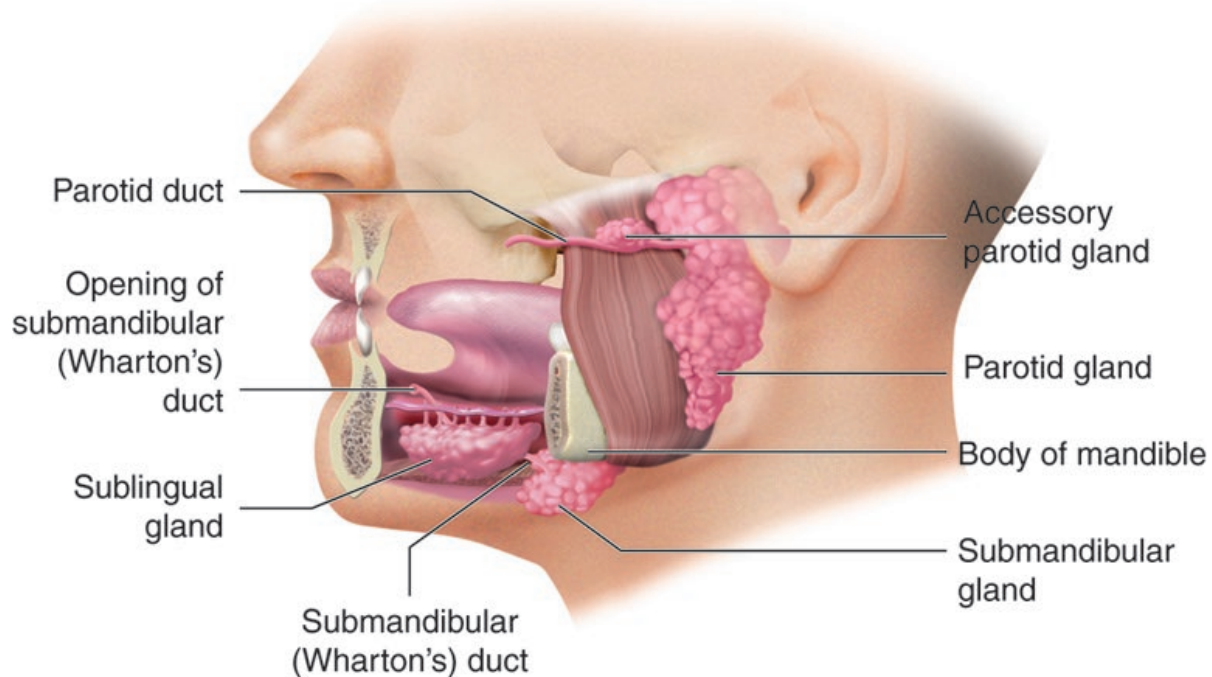


Submandibular Gland Surgery: Before and After Your Procedure

What is a submandibular gland?



The **submandibular gland** is one of 3 major **salivary glands** (body parts that make **saliva**, or spit) in the head and neck. This gland produces saliva to moisten (wet) the mouth and helps you chew, swallow, digest food, and keep your mouth and teeth clean. The **submandibular duct**, also called the **Wharton's duct**, drains saliva from the glands at the floor of the mouth.

What is submandibular gland surgery?

Some people have medical problems with their submandibular gland, including:

- **Sialolithiasis:** Stones that form in the gland that can lead to gland blockage and infections

- **Sialadenitis:** Inflammation (swelling) of the gland caused by infections, autoimmune disease, or a medication side effect

Submandibular gland surgery is a surgery to remove the submandibular gland to fix these issues.

What are my instructions before surgery?

- Eat a healthy, balanced diet, drink plenty of water, and stay as physically active as possible before surgery. These activities will help prepare your body for surgery and heal better after surgery.
- At least 1 week before surgery, do not smoke or vape and do not use recreational drugs or alcohol.

What can I expect after surgery?

- Your jaw and neck will be tender (a little painful) for the first 3 days after surgery. You may not feel like eating or drinking as much as usual.
- We will leave a small, “straw-like” drain in your **incision** (the cut made during surgery) and put gauze (fabric) over the drain to soak up any fluids after surgery. We will also place a pressure dressing around the neck to stop the space where your gland was removed from filling with fluid or blood. Your surgeon will remove the drain 24-48 hours after surgery.
- The surgeon will close your incision using absorbable **sutures** (stitches) or surgical glue. Your sutures or glue will usually dissolve within 2 weeks after surgery. You will not need to get any sutures removed.

What can I eat and drink after surgery?

- Eat softer foods and drink more fluids than usual for the first 3 days after surgery (or longer, if your neck is still tender).

- If another doctor told you to limit fluids (because you have a heart or kidney condition, for example), keep following their instructions.
- Eat smaller meals more often that are high in protein. Eating protein will help your body heal. You can read about how to add protein to your diet here: bit.ly/MM-HighCalorieProtein.

What activities can I do after surgery?

- Rest at home for the first 1-3 days after surgery. Limit your physical activity during this time.
- Keep your head elevated (raised) with 1-2 pillows when you lie down or sleep.
- Do not lift, strain, or do any strenuous activities (exercise that will increase your heart rate or blood pressure) for 2 weeks after surgery. Limiting your physical activity will help reduce your bleeding risk.
- Do not swim or go underwater for 1 week after surgery.
 - Once your drain is removed, it's okay for you to shower.

How do I take care of my incision after surgery?

- While you are at home, keep your incision uncovered. If you leave the house, cover the area with a bandage.
- Do not use makeup, sunblock or sunscreen, or lotions around your surgical site (the area where you had your incision and surgery) for 2 weeks after surgery.
- Do not shave over the surgical site for 3 weeks after surgery. Use care when you start shaving again because there may be numbness near the surgical site.
- 4-6 weeks after surgery, you can massage the incision and use scar cream.

- Keep your scar out of the sun for at least 6 months after surgery. If you cannot avoid the sun, use a strong sunblock on your scars (SPF 30 or higher).

How do I manage my pain at home after surgery?

- You may have a sore throat for up to 1 week after surgery. This is normal, and you likely won't be able to chew as much.
- Take your pain medications as prescribed for the first 72 hours (3 days) when you have swelling from the surgery.
- Swallowing will be easier 30 minutes after taking your pain medications.
- If needed, use ice packs to help with pain.
 - Place an ice pack in a cloth. Use the ice pack (20 minutes on the surgical site and 20 minutes off) while you're awake for the first 3 days after surgery.

What follow-up appointments will I have after surgery?

- You will have a drain removal appointment with your surgeon's team within 2 days after surgery.
- After your drain removal appointment, your doctor will talk with you about any other follow-up appointments you may need. You can do these other appointments through video or in-person.

When can I go back to work?

- Typically, you will be off work for 1 week (depending on the type of work you do). If your job involves lifting anything heavier than 10-20 pounds, plan to be off for 2 weeks.

When should I call the doctor?

Call us if you experience any of the following symptoms:

- Fever higher than 101 °F (taken by mouth)
- You can't drink or swallow anything
- You have vomiting that doesn't go away
- You feel pain, pressure, or fullness in your neck that is not controlled by pain medications

What is the contact information?

Taubman Center Otolaryngology Clinic

- Monday through Friday, 8:00 AM - 4:30 PM:
 - Call (734) 936-8051 to speak to a staff member who will connect you to the right team of nurses.
- After 4:30 PM, or on weekends or holidays:
 - Call (734) 936-6267 and ask for the Otolaryngology (ENT) resident on call.

Brighton Center for Specialty Care Otolaryngology

- Call (810) 263-4000

West Ann Arbor Health Center Otolaryngology

- Call (734) 998-7380

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