

Surgical Specialists Centre

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Monday to Friday: 8:30am - 5:30pm | Closed on Sat, Sun & Public Holidays



Nearest MRT Station: Kent Ridge (Circle Line)

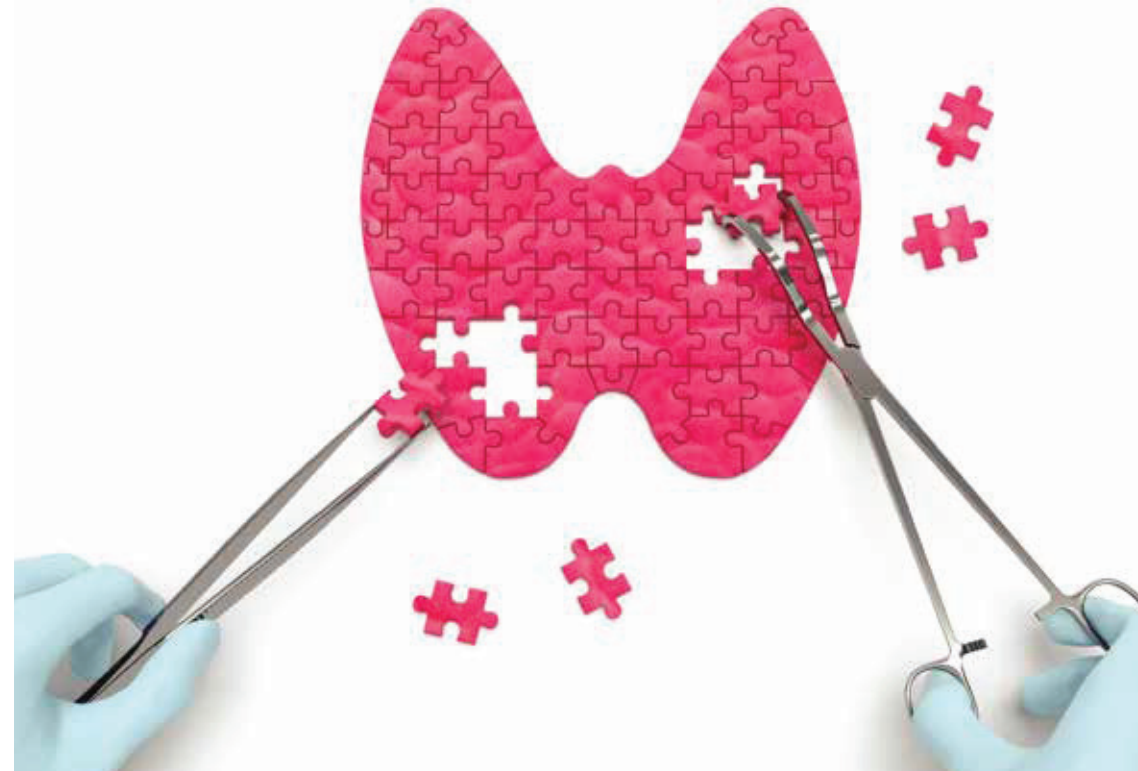
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Learn More about

Parathyroid Adenoma



Parathyroid Adenoma



What are parathyroid glands?

Parathyroid glands secrete parathyroid hormones (PTH) to control calcium levels in the body. An individual has 4 glands located behind the thyroid.

When does one need surgery?

- When a parathyroid gland becomes overactive and is not controlled by the body's normal regulating mechanism
- This causes calcium levels in the body to increase and may result in osteoporosis, mood changes, persistent muscle cramps, numbness of the body, joint pains and urinary stones

What investigations are typically done?

- Blood investigations including calcium and PTH levels
- Ultrasound scan of the neck
- A Methoxy Iso Butyl Isonitrile (MIBI)/ Single-photon Emission Computed Tomography (SPECT) or four-dimensional CT scan of the neck (computer scan)

What does parathyroid surgery entail?



- If both the ultrasound and SPECT confirm the location of the overactive parathyroid gland, surgery can be performed to excise the culprit gland under local anaesthesia
- If both the ultrasound and SPECT do not confirm the site of the overactive parathyroid gland, a slightly longer operation is required to examine the 4 glands intra-operatively, under general anaesthesia
- A small 2-4 cm horizontal incision is typically made over the neck

What are the risks of parathyroid surgery?

- There is a 3-5% chance of recurrence in a different parathyroid gland and which may require a repeated surgery in the future
- Low calcium levels after surgery is rare
- Less than 1% of patients will require a second operation due to bleeding
- Voice changes may occur temporarily in 5% and permanently in 1% of patients if the nerve controlling the voice box is affected

What to expect for surgery?

Most patients undergoing parathyroid surgery are admitted on the day of the operation. Depending on the fitness of the patient, a visit to the anaesthetist may be required prior to surgery.

This surgery may last from 30 minutes to 2 hours and the estimated hospital stay is approximately 1 day. Temporary supplemental calcium and vitamin D may be needed post-operatively while the body's calcium normalises usually within a month.

Summary

- Parathyroid surgery is done for overactive parathyroid glands in the neck causing high calcium levels
- It is a safe operation with relatively few complications
- The anticipated length of stay is 1 day