

Head and Neck Surgery Pathway: Reconstruction Outside Your Mouth

These are goals for your recovery. Your experience may not follow this pathway exactly. Your doctor or nurse will tell you what to expect.

Surgery date: _____ Expected discharge date: _____

	Before Surgery	
What tests, procedures, and medical devices should I expect?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presurgical testing appointment: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Bring a list of all medications you take. - Bring results from medical tests done outside of MSK. - Your nurse practitioner may order more tests, appointments, or both. 	
What medications will I take?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask your doctor when to stop taking blood thinners. Examples include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Aspirin - Nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs) - Herbal supplements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Follow your surgical team's instructions for taking other medications.
Which team members will I see?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Head and Neck surgeon • Plastic surgeon • Speech and Swallow therapist • Dietitian 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social worker, case manager, or both • Tobacco Cessation nurse (if you smoke or recently quit)
What should I do?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Follow the instructions in your surgical guide. • Stop smoking. • Tell your surgical team if you drink alcohol. • Plan your ride home after surgery. • Sign up for MyMSK (the MSK patient portal). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The day before surgery: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Wash with Hibiclens® if your surgical team tells you to. - Don't eat or drink anything after midnight.

Notes:

	Day of Surgery	
What tests, procedures, and medical devices should I expect?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Placed before surgery: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Intravenous (IV) line in a vein Compression boots on your legs Placed during surgery: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Urinary (Foley®) catheter in your urethra Tubes and drains in your incision If you have a skin graft, a vacuum dressing may be placed over the donor site. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> After surgery, you will have all of these devices when you wake up.
What medications will I take?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Before surgery, take only the medications your surgical team told you to take. Take them with a small sip of water. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> After surgery, you will get pain medication, medication to prevent nausea, and antibiotics.
Which team members will I see?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Before surgery, your Head and Neck surgery team and Plastic surgery team will mark your surgical site. 	
What should I do?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The morning before surgery, wash with Hibiclens if your surgical team tells you to. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> After surgery, use your incentive spirometer 10 times each hour you're awake.

Notes:

While you're in the hospital:

- Your Head and Neck surgery and Plastic surgery teams will visit your room every day.
- You will wear compression boots while you're in bed.
- Tell your nurse if your pain isn't controlled.

	1 Day After Surgery	2 Days After Surgery
What tests, procedures and medical devices should I expect?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Your urinary catheter will be removed when you move to your hospital room. Your nurse will check your free flap for a Doppler signal every hour. This is to make sure blood is flowing. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Your nurse will check your free flap for a Doppler signal every hour.
What medications will I take?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Oral pain medication (as needed) Antibiotics Daily medications 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Oral pain medication (as needed) Antibiotics Daily medications
Which team members will I see?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dietitian Speech and Swallow therapist, if needed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Case manager Physical therapist or occupational therapist, if needed
What should I do?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Start eating soft or pureed foods. Use your incentive spirometer 10 times each hour you're awake. Sit in your chair for most of the day. A staff member will help you move. Walk 1 or more laps around the nursing unit. A staff member will help you. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Start planning your home care with your case manager. They will talk with you about your caregiver, medical supplies, and other changes you may need to make at home. Use your incentive spirometer 10 times each hour you're awake. Sit in your chair for most of the day. Walk at least 2 to 3 laps around the nursing unit. A staff member will help you.

Notes:

	3 Days After Surgery	4 Days After Surgery
What tests, procedures and medical devices should I expect?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Your nurse will check your free flap for a Doppler signal every 2 hours. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Your nurse will check your free flap for a Doppler signal every 2 hours.
What medications will I take?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Oral pain medication (as needed) Antibiotics Daily medications 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Oral pain medication (as needed) Daily medications
Which team members will I see?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Physical therapist or occupational therapist, if needed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Case manager Physical therapist or occupational therapist, if needed
What should I do?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learn how to care for your drain(s) and dressing(s). Your nurse will teach you. Use your incentive spirometer 10 times each hour you're awake. Sit in your chair for most of the day. Walk at least 3 to 4 laps around the nursing unit. A staff member will help you. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Make sure you have a ride home after discharge. Finish planning your discharge with your case manager. If a nurse will be visiting you at home, they will give you information about the nursing agency. Review how to care for your drain(s) and dressing(s). Use your incentive spirometer 10 times each hour you're awake. Sit in your chair for most of the day. Walk 4 or more laps around the nursing unit. A staff member will help you.

Notes:

	5 Days After Surgery (Day of Discharge)	After Discharge
What tests, procedures and medical devices should I expect?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A staff member will review your discharge instructions with you. • You may leave the hospital with tubes and drains in your incision. • If you have a vacuum dressing, it will be removed before discharge. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The tubes and drains in your incision may be removed at your follow-up appointment.
What medications will I take?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oral pain medication (as needed) • Daily medications • Your doctor will give you prescriptions for medications to take at home. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oral pain medication (as needed) • Stool softeners (as needed) • Other prescription medications, if needed • Daily medications
Which team members will I see?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discharge pharmacist 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You will have a follow-up appointment with your Head and Neck surgery and Plastic surgery teams 1 week after discharge.
What should I do?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plan to leave the hospital by 11:00 AM. • Gather your belongings in the morning. • Be out of bed for most of the day. • Walk as often as you can. A staff member will help you. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Follow the instructions in your surgical guide. • Call your surgeon's office if you have any questions or concerns. • Don't drive until your surgeon says it's safe, especially if you're taking pain medication.

Notes:

Activity and Recovery Log

Use this log to track your recovery after your surgery.

	1 Day After Surgery	2 Days After Surgery	3 Days After Surgery
Moving & Walking Check 1 box each time you move from your bed or walk 1 lap.	Goal: Move from your bed to your chair 3 times <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> Goal: Walk 1 lap or more <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Goal: Walk 2 to 3 laps or more <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Goal: Walk 3 to 4 laps or more <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
Incentive Spirometer Check 1 box for each hour you use your incentive spirometer 10 times.	Goal: 10 times each hour <input type="checkbox"/> 6 AM <input type="checkbox"/> 7 AM <input type="checkbox"/> 8 AM <input type="checkbox"/> 9 AM <input type="checkbox"/> 10 AM <input type="checkbox"/> 11 AM <input type="checkbox"/> 12 PM <input type="checkbox"/> 1 PM <input type="checkbox"/> 2 PM <input type="checkbox"/> 3 PM <input type="checkbox"/> 4 PM <input type="checkbox"/> 5 PM <input type="checkbox"/> 6 PM <input type="checkbox"/> 7 PM <input type="checkbox"/> 8 PM <input type="checkbox"/> 9 PM <input type="checkbox"/> 10 PM	Goal: 10 times each hour <input type="checkbox"/> 6 AM <input type="checkbox"/> 7 AM <input type="checkbox"/> 8 AM <input type="checkbox"/> 9 AM <input type="checkbox"/> 10 AM <input type="checkbox"/> 11 AM <input type="checkbox"/> 12 PM <input type="checkbox"/> 1 PM <input type="checkbox"/> 2 PM <input type="checkbox"/> 3 PM <input type="checkbox"/> 4 PM <input type="checkbox"/> 5 PM <input type="checkbox"/> 6 PM <input type="checkbox"/> 7 PM <input type="checkbox"/> 8 PM <input type="checkbox"/> 9 PM <input type="checkbox"/> 10 PM	Goal: 10 times each hour <input type="checkbox"/> 6 AM <input type="checkbox"/> 7 AM <input type="checkbox"/> 8 AM <input type="checkbox"/> 9 AM <input type="checkbox"/> 10 AM <input type="checkbox"/> 11 AM <input type="checkbox"/> 12 PM <input type="checkbox"/> 1 PM <input type="checkbox"/> 2 PM <input type="checkbox"/> 3 PM <input type="checkbox"/> 4 PM <input type="checkbox"/> 5 PM <input type="checkbox"/> 6 PM <input type="checkbox"/> 7 PM <input type="checkbox"/> 8 PM <input type="checkbox"/> 9 PM <input type="checkbox"/> 10 PM

Notes:

	4 Days After Surgery	5 Days After Surgery
Walking Check 1 box each time you walk 1 lap around the nursing unit.	Goal: Walk 4 laps or more <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Goal: Walk 4 laps or more <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
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