

Neck surgery

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Patients undergoing neck surgery , e.g. thyroid surgery , must be observed for accumulation of blood in the wound, which may obstruct the airway and cause rapid asphyxia. This potentially life-threatening complication necessitates systems for early detection and prompt evacuation (see guidelines from the Difficult Airway Society , the British Association of Endocrine and Thyroid Surgeons and the British Association of Otorhinolaryngology , Head and Neck Surgery). Another potential but less dangerous complication is damage to the recurrent laryngeal nerve, which can produce voice change (see also Chapter 55).

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