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# Understanding Reduction Thyrochondroplasty

*Gender words are used here to talk about anatomy and health risk. Please use this information in a way that works best for you and your provider as you talk about your care.*

Reduction thyrochondroplasty is a type of gender-affirming surgery. It is also called a tracheal cartilage shave.

## Why is this procedure done?

Reduction thyrochondroplasty is done to give a person a more female-looking neck. A surgeon removes some of the Adam's apple. The Adam's apple tends to stick out more in males than in females. It's made up of cartilage. It sits in front of the larynx, or voice box. The surgeon may also reshape skin or other parts of the neck.

## What happens before the procedure?

Your healthcare provider will ask about your health. They will also give you a physical exam. They will note the size and shape of your Adam's apple. Some photos may be taken. This information helps your healthcare provider plan the surgery.

You may also need some tests, such as blood work or imaging tests. Tell your healthcare provider about all the medicines you take. That includes prescriptions, over-the-counter medicines, herbs, and supplements.

## What happens during the procedure?

Reduction thyrochondroplasty can be done many ways. Your surgeon will decide on the best approach for you. The procedure may be done in a hospital or surgery center. Make sure that the surgeon that you choose is experienced doing this type of procedure.

In general, the surgery includes the following steps:

- You will lie down on your back on the operating table.
- You will be given medicine through an IV. This medicine will help you relax and sleep during the procedure. You won't feel any pain.
- The surgeon will make an incision (cut) in your neck around the Adam's apple.
- The surgeon will remove some of the cartilage from the Adam's apple. They may also make other cuts to the skin and tissue to reshape the look of the neck.
- The surgeon will close the cut or cuts.

## What happens after the procedure?

After the surgery, you'll be taken to a recovery room. Healthcare providers will closely watch your heart rate, blood pressure, and temperature. You will be given pain medicine

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and fluids.

When you are ready to go home, make sure you follow all care instructions from your healthcare provider. These will include how to care for your surgical wounds and when to take your pain medicines. You may be uncomfortable during the first few days after surgery. But pain can be managed with medicine. Talk with your healthcare provider about pain relief options.

For a while after surgery, you may feel tired or weak. The length of time it takes to recover from surgery will vary. You will need to limit your activity for a while.

You may feel like there's a lump in your throat and your voice may sound hoarse. Both will get better over time.

Keep all follow-up visits with your healthcare provider to make sure you are healing well. Talk with your healthcare provider if you have any questions or concerns.

## **Risks of the procedure**

Reduction thyrochondroplasty has the following risks:

- Bleeding
- Infection
- Swelling
- Blood clots
- Weak voice
- Loss of voice
- Spasms of the vocal cords
- Pain while swallowing

## **Call**

Call if you have:

- Trouble breathing
- Inability to swallow, eat, or drink
- Excessive drooling

## **When to call your healthcare provider**

Call your healthcare provider if you have any of the following:

- Fever of 100.4°F (38°C) or higher, or as directed by your provider
- Redness, swelling, or fluid leaking from your incision that gets worse
- Pain that gets worse

- Symptoms that don't get better or get worse
- Any new symptoms

## Next steps

If you are thinking about reduction thyrochondroplasty, here are some questions to ask your provider:

- Is the procedure covered by my insurance? Do you have an advocate to help coordinate with my insurance company?
- Where will the surgery be done, and will I need to stay in the hospital?
- Will I have dressings, bandages, or drains after my surgery? If so, when will they be removed?
- What are my activity restrictions after surgery? When can I resume my normal activities like work?
- When can I drive after surgery?
- When can I shower or bathe?
- How will I be kept comfortable after surgery?
- How long will healing take?