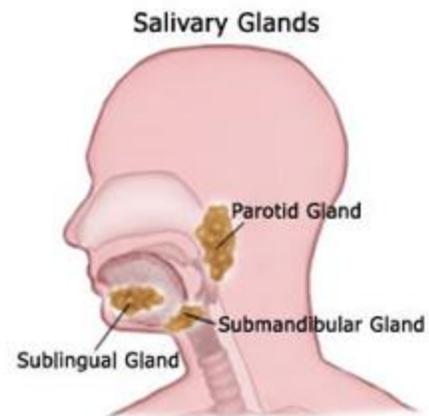


Information on Submandibular Gland Excision

The Submandibular Gland: The submandibular gland is a gland that produces saliva. You have two glands, one on each side of your upper neck. The glands are beneath the floor of the mouth in front of the angle of the mandible (lower jaw). A gland may need to be removed for several reasons.

1. The submandibular gland may develop tumors, the majority of which are benign.
2. The submandibular gland may become repetitively blocked with stones and subsequently infected. MANY of these stones cannot be seen on X ray films.
3. Three to five lymph nodes reside next to the submandibular gland. These lymph nodes drain the skin of the cheek, lips, and mouth. Some skin and mouth cancers in these areas may spread to the lymph nodes adjacent to the submandibular gland.



The Facial Nerve: The facial nerve starts in the brain, exits the skull just under the ear canal, splits into 5 thin branches, and runs through the parotid gland. This nerve controls the muscles of facial expression: forehead wrinkling, eyebrow raising, eyelid squinting and blinking, lip puckering, and smiling. One branch runs under the lower jaw to the lower lip and corner of the mouth. It may be stretched or cut during the procedure. The lower lip on the side of the surgery may be elevated for a few months after surgery. Occasionally this lip asymmetry is permanent. This may lead to some drooling out of the corner of the mouth.

Questions: Ask your surgeon if you have other questions or concerns.