

Health Info to know with Dr. Joe

Expert advice with Head and Neck surgeon and University of Florida Associate Professor, Dr. Joe Parell. Dr. Parell is board certified in Otolaryngology and board certified in Facial Plastic Surgery.

Q: When my family doctor took an X-ray of my neck for another problem, he found a lump in my thyroid. Does this mean it should be removed?

A: First, we would need to know if there is a history of thyroid problems in your family. Then we would need to examine your neck to learn more about the lump. We must also determine whether the nodule has affected your vocal cords. We would draw blood to see how well your thyroid gland is functioning and using ultrasound images of your neck determine if the nodule is a cyst or solid mass. Finally, we might perform an ultrasound guided needle biopsy of the nodule. If the results of these tests indicate the possibility of cancer, surgical removal will be recommended. This is typically an outpatient procedure, and normal activity can be resumed in just a few days. In selective cases, the surgery can be done with endoscopes to minimize scarring. If surgery is not necessary, we will repeat your ultrasound in a few months. If the nodule does not change, we will continue follow-up exams on a 6 to 12 month schedule.