

Abstract

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Potential benefit of oral calcium/vitamin D administration for prevention of symptomatic hypocalcemia after total thyroidectomy.

Kurukahvecioglu O, Karamercan A, Akin M, Tezel E, Ege B, Taneri F, Onuk E.

Gazi University Faculty of Medicine, Department of General Surgery, Ankara, Turkey.

OBJECTIVE: To evaluate routine oral calcium and vitamin D administration for preventing symptoms of hypocalcemia after total thyroidectomy.

SUBJECTS AND METHODS: A total of 487 consecutive patients were prospectively randomized into two groups in terms of routine oral calcium and vitamin D supplementation: In the control group (244 patients) the treatment was not routinely started after surgery, whereas the treated group (243 patients) received routine supplementation that started on postoperative day 1.

RESULTS: Patients of treated group had only minor hypocalcemia symptoms, whereas 7 patients of control group experienced carpopedal spasm as a major symptom ($p < 0.001$). None of the patients in the treated group required intravenous calcium administration. Average hospital stay of the treated group patients was significantly shorter than that of control group ($p < 0.001$).

CONCLUSIONS: Routine postoperative calcium and vitamin D supplementation therapy may be useful for the prevention of symptomatic hypocalcemia after total thyroidectomy and may allow for a safe and early discharge from the hospital.

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