

Endocrinology prioritisation guide during COVID-19

Quick reference guide 2: thyroid surgery

This guideline indicates the types of conditions to prioritise for thyroid surgery during the COVID-19 pandemic.

For specific COVID-19 precautions during the amber and green COVID-19 pandemic phases, refer to the general principles in the [Endocrinology prioritisation guide during COVID-19](#).

Amber COVID-19 response phase

Patients with the following conditions require surgery within one month

- Thyroid cancers that:
 - pose significant morbidity related to local invasion (trachea or recurrent laryngeal nerve)
 - exhibit aggressive tumour biology (short doubling time, rapid tumour growth or recurrence, or rapidly progressive local-regional disease)
- Life-threatening or severely symptomatic Graves' disease that cannot be medically controlled
- Goitre with symptomatic airway compromise or with a risk of impending loss of the airway
- Open biopsy for confirmation of clinically suspected anaplastic thyroid cancer or thyroid lymphoma when other diagnostic measures have been inconclusive
- Pregnant patients who have thyroid related disorders that are dangerous to the health of the mother or foetus, and that cannot be controlled medically.

Green COVID-19 recovery phase

Patients with the following conditions require surgery within three months

- Thyroid nodules that:
 - show indeterminate cytology
 - exhibit ultrasound features suggesting malignancy
- Goitre with obstructive symptoms but with no airway compromise.

References

1. Metzger R, Singer M. Surgical Affairs Committee – comment on thyroid surgery during the Covid-19 Pandemic. American Thyroid Association; Available from: <https://www.thyroid.org/covid-19/comment-on-thyroid-surgery-during-pandemic/>
2. Miller J, Collinson, T. Position statement: Endocrine surgery during the COVID-19 pandemic. Australian and New Zealand Endocrine Surgeons and General Surgeons Australia; April 2020 Available from: https://www.generalsurgeons.com.au/media/files/News/DOC%202020-04-24%20Position%20Statement_Endocrine%20Surgery%20during%20the%20COVID-19%20Pandemic_UPDATED.pdf