Endocrine Surgical Centre at Epworth Freemasons
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About Us
The Endocrine Surgical Centre at Epworth Freemasons provides co-ordinated care for patients with endocrine problems requiring surgery.

It is a multidisciplinary group of specialists who are highly skilled and who are committed to working together to provide you with the most appropriate treatment plans. The group of specialists are usually the ones listed below:

* Endocrine Surgeons
* Endocrinologists
* Radiologists
* Dietician - consultant

Our Team
Mr Bill Fleming – Specialist Endocrine Surgeon
Mr Su-Wen Loh – Breast and Endocrine Surgeon
Dr Julie Miller – Specialist Endocrine Surgeon
Mr Jason Tan – Specialist Endocrine Surgeon
Dr Myra Yeo – Endocrinologist

Treatment Approach
We work together as a team to ensure you have the best possible care. This means we put you at the centre of the care plan where each of our particular area of expertise comes together to make sure we get the best outcome for your condition.

Conditions that affect the thyroid, parathyroid or adrenal glands often involve both medical and surgical problems. In other words, these glands may produce excess hormones or not enough. An overall understanding of both the surgical and hormone issues is required for the best assessment and management of your condition. A team approach involving medical endocrinologists, endocrine surgeons and radiologists working side-by-side is therefore not only more efficient, but it will provide improved care for you.
Our Model

We will review your GP referral one week prior to your appointment. This will allow us to stream the referral to the appropriate specialists as well as pre-book any radiology that may be required. Given that there will be both an endocrinologist and endocrine surgeon consulting at the same time, you will be able to have both the surgical and medical sides of your condition reviewed together prior to undertaking any radiology or radiological procedures on the same day.

Surgical Procedures

In general, endocrine surgery is performed under general anaesthesia. You are completely asleep and unaware as the surgery takes place.

Thyroid Surgery

An operation undertaken for risk of malignancy, over-activity of the thyroid, compressive symptoms and sometimes for cosmetic issues. The operations take 1-2 hours and you are usually in hospital for 1-2 nights.

Hemithyroidectomy
An operation to remove half the thyroid gland.

Total Thyroidectomy
An operation to remove all of the thyroid gland.

Completion Thyroidectomy
An operation to remove any remaining thyroid tissue after previous thyroid surgery.
**Sistrunk operation**

An operation to remove thyroglossal cysts. The thyroid gland originally develops from tissue of the tongue. It goes downwards to finally rest over the trachea or wind-pipe in the lower neck. Sometimes, it does not close off normally and the result can be a thyroglossal cyst. This cyst can get infected or rupture and surgical excision prior to these complications is recommended. The Sistrunk operation involves excision of the cyst as well as the embryological tract which has allowed the cyst to develop. The operation takes about half an hour and patients are usually in hospital for 1-2 nights.

**Robotic Thyroid Surgery**

A new approach to thyroid surgery which, in appropriate patients, eliminates the need for the scar on the neck that conventional open thyroid surgery requires. Robotic thyroid surgery is a technique new to Australia.

This technique utilises the Da Vinci Robot Surgical System. It provides a three dimensional view with 10x magnification as well as instruments which essentially have “wrists”. The incision is placed under the arm, and when healed the scar is easily hidden. At the moment, Epworth is the only health care network in Victoria with the capability to offer this approach.

**Parathyroid Surgery**

This is undertaken for overactive parathyroid glands causing hyperparathyroidism. Hyperparathyroidism can lead to osteoporosis and likely increased fracture risk. It can also cause a number of less well-defined symptoms like bone pain, lethargy and forgetfulness. The surgery may take half an hour to two hours depending on difficulty. Usually you will only require overnight stay after surgery.

**Minimally Invasive Parathyroidectomy**

An operation to remove an overactive parathyroid gland that has been localized with radiology via a small incision.

**Bilateral Cervical Exploration for Parathyroidectomy**

An operation to find and remove an overactive parathyroid gland(s).

**Adrenal Surgery**

This is undertaken if the adrenal gland is over-active or has a risk of malignancy. It is usually undertaken laparoscopically. Surgery may take 1-2 hours depending on difficulty. Patients usually stay in hospital for 1-2 nights after laparoscopic surgery but may stay for 5-7 nights after open surgery.
PRA (Posterior Retroperitoneoscopic Adrenalectomy)

The PRA technique represents a major advance in adrenal surgery, offering less pain, less blood loss, and faster recovery than traditional laparoscopic adrenal surgery.

PRA is minimally invasive “keyhole” adrenal surgery through the back. More than half of patients require no prescription pain medicine at all after surgery, and many are able to go home on the day of surgery.

This technique was developed in Europe and brought to Victoria in 2011 by our highly experienced team. Epworth Freemason’s is the only Private Hospital in Victoria where PRA is offered.

Laparoscopic Adrenalectomy

A key-hole operation to remove an adrenal gland.

Open Adrenalectomy

An operation for a very large or possibly malignant adrenal gland that requires a open incision on the abdomen.

Making a Referral

To access this Centre and a consultation with one of the specialists, patients can be referred by their general practitioner, or treating specialist.

If you do not have a referral, an appointment can be made with the Epworth Freemasons GP Clinic and a referral organised.

Your GP can make a referral on a referral pad online or phone 94188162 to book an appointment.

Costs

Your initial consultation at the Endocrine Surgical Centre at Epworth Freemasons has a charge of $180.00 excluding your imaging costs. The fee includes the pre consultation review.

Imaging provided by MIA is generally at a special fee for our Endocrine Centre Patients. Our approach is to enable your imaging appointment and specialist appointment to be on the same morning or afternoon as your centre appointment.

If you need to see the endocrinologist, their fees are itemised in our fee information sheet.

We have a cost structure for the centre which we will be happy to provide you.
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