Postsurgical hypoparathyroidism is the most common cause of chronic hypocalcemia. This condition may occur after removal of all parathyroid glands or after interruption of the blood supply to the parathyroid glands during thyroidectomy and radical neck dissection. The severity of the clinical presentation of hypocalcemia may vary from an asymptomatic laboratory finding to a severe life-threatening condition. Persistent hypoparathyroidism requires treatment that must be maintained throughout the patient's lifetime, and for this reason care is required to avoid complications. In this review the most relevant aspects of calcium homeostasis and its alteration in hypoparathyroidism are briefly discussed. In addition, the main approaches to treatment of the hypocalcemic state are presented.

PMID: 14870783 [PubMed - indexed for MEDLINE]