

Tonsillectomy / Adenoidectomy Postoperative Instructions

Activity:

- Indoor activity is recommended for the first week. You should avoid any heavy physical exertion for 2 weeks; if you are in school, you should not participate in gym/sports for 2 weeks. You may resume limited activities (school/work) as you are up to it.

Bleeding:

- Bleeding is rare after surgery. However, you may spit out a few small spots of blood from your mouth or nose in the first day after surgery. Bleeding may also occur 7-10 days after surgery when the scabs start to fall off from the healing tonsil bed. If this happens to you, do not become excited, for this bleeding is usually slight and stops spontaneously. Remain quiet, lie down, and spit the blood out gently. Gargle the throat gently with ice water and stay quiet. If bleeding does not stop promptly, call the office at (909) 466-8400. If the doctor is not available and bleeding continues, go to the nearest emergency room. On rare occasion, you/your child may need to be hospitalized to control the bleeding.

Diet:

- Fluids are very important after surgery to prevent dehydration. Cold liquid is best and should be given frequently. Start with sips of clear liquids such as apple juice, flat soda, clear broth and water. Avoid citrus juices, tomato juice and carbonated beverages.
- Slowly increase the amount of liquid. Too much liquid given too quickly may cause nausea and vomiting. You/your child should consume 6-8 glasses of fluid a day.
- Whenever liquids are tolerated, you/your child may start eating solid foods. Do not worry about eating as long as adequate fluid is consumed daily. Remain on a soft diet for 10-14 days after surgery.
- Suggested drinks and foods (Cold, soft, non-acidic, unsalted, bland food would be best)
 - Flavored ices (popsicles, and sherbet) are the best option immediately
 - Clear liquids (sips of water, fruit drinks, nectars i.e. apple, pear, peach)
 - Jell-O, milk shakes, gelatin, bananas, canned pears, peaches
 - Soup (chicken broth with little or no additives that need chewing)
 - Applesauce, scrambled or poached eggs
 - Oatmeal or other hot cereals (cooled)
 - Mashed potatoes, rice, pasta, pudding
 - Lukewarm or cool tea, Gatorade or other sports drinks
 - Dairy products such as ice cream and milk can be consumed if followed with a glass of water
- Foods to avoid
 - All foods that are too hot or too cold
 - All foods that are heavily salted or spicy (pickles, olives)
 - All foods that are acidic (grapefruit or orange juice, tomato sauce)
 - All food that are hard and crunchy (pretzels, potato chips, popcorn, crackers) as they might cause bleeding
 - Raw fruits and vegetables



Fever:

- Most children experience a low-grade temperature. This is caused by dehydration. Encourage fluid intake and if needed, use **TYLENOL (NOT ASPIRIN)**. If the temperature remains above 102.2 (39.0 Celsius) and does not respond to Tylenol, please call our office or go to the closest emergency room.

Post Op Pain:

- Following a tonsillectomy, pain (sore throat) will peak on day 2-3 and then resolve over 10-14 days. The pain is worse with swallowing and can also be “felt” in the ears as an “earache”. Following an adenoidectomy alone, there may only be minimal pain. Pain medication, if needed, should be taken 15 minutes before meals to allow less painful eating.
- **DO NOT GIVE ASPIRIN (ASPIRIN MAY CAUSE BLEEDING), AND AVOID MEDICATIONS SUCH AS MOTRIN, ADVIL, OR ANY MEDICATION FOR ARTHRITIS.** For mild pain, use plain Tylenol (acetaminophen) every 4 hours.
- An antibiotic is usually prescribed for seven to ten days following the surgery. The patient also receives a prescription for painkillers in the form of codeine or hydrocodone. These products cause somnolence, drowsiness and constipation. Occasionally, if the patient vomits, phenergan suppositories may be necessary.

General Instructions:

- Children should be kept indoors and relatively quiet for a week.
- Frequent coughing and clearing the throat should be avoided
- Objectionable mouth odor is commonly observed and is relieved by abundant fluid intake - A white or gray membrane on the sides of the throat is normal and should disappear in 1 to 2 weeks
- Earache is expected. It is not an ear infection, it is referred from the throat
- Occasionally, transient neck stiffness may occur in children following adenoidectomy.
- Please note that painkillers cause drowsiness. Patients who take painkillers should not operate machinery, drive or make important decisions. Do not drink alcoholic beverages while taking painkillers.

Call the Doctor at (909) 466-8400 if you/your child have:

- Fever over 102° F
- Persistent vomiting (nausea and vomiting can occur as a side effect of general anesthesia or secondary to swallowed blood) lasting more than several hours post-op.
- Inability to keep liquids down due to nausea and vomiting
- Extreme pain not relieved by your prescribed medication, swelling, or excessive bleeding.