
POST-TONSILLECTOMY – CARE AT HOME INSTRUCTIONS

What should I expect after surgery?

- Throat and ear pain is common for 7 to 14 days after surgery. This may affect the sound and volume of your child's voice and his or her ability to eat and drink.
- Your child may feel "out of sort" for a period of a week to ten days.

What about pain or discomfort?

- Give your child Tylenol® or Tempra® every four hours for the first three days after the operation. For the best pain control, wake your child up at night. After three days you may give Tylenol® or Tempra® every four hours when needed. Do not give more than five doses in 24 hours.
- You may add ibuprofen to the acetaminophen schedule. After three days give ibuprofen every six hours when needed. Do not give more than four doses in a 24 hour.
- For the correct amount of pain medication to give follow the instructions on the medication bottle using your child's weight.
- It is okay for your child to require both the acetaminophen and ibuprofen for pain control.
- Try to schedule the pain kills so that your child is receiving pain medication 30 minutes before each meal. This will help with the discomfort during meals.
- **Do not give medications containing Aspirin ® (eg. Aspergum®, acetylsalicylic acid) or Pepto-Bismol ®, as they may cause bleeding.**
- Talk to your pharmacist or doctor if you have questions regarding your child's pain medications or schedule.

Your child's weight today is _____ kg.

Tylenol® was last given at _____. Tylenol® is due next at _____.

Ibuprofen was last given at _____. Ibuprofen is due next at _____.

When can my child resume usual activities?

- Your child should rest at home for several days after surgery and may return to school or daycare when they are eating and drinking well and no longer requires pain medication. This is usually seven to ten days on average, but can be less or more for some children.

- Your child should not participate in any sports or physical education for at least two weeks after tonsil surgery.
- Keep your child away from crowds and smoky places.
- Keep them away from people with coughs and colds.

What should I give my child to eat?

Encourage your child to drink lots of fluids. He/she may use a straw, which may promote adequate fluid intake. Your child may go back to his/her regular diet. There is no restriction on food. Your child may want to avoid crusty foods (crackers, potato chips, and hard bread crusts) since these can cause irritation and slow down healing after the surgery.

Is there anything else I should know?

- Adequate fluid and food intake is important as it will help healing and reduce throat pain.
- You may notice white or gray patches in your child's throat where the tonsils were. This is a normal part of the healing process.
- Bad breath is expected for the first week or two after surgery. This is a normal part of the healing process and is caused by the scabs where the adenoids and/or tonsils were removed. The scabs will generally melt away and be swallowed in 10 to 14 days. Your child's teeth can be brushed and the mouth rinsed with mouthwash as usual.

What about follow-up care?

- Follow-up care is a key part of your child's treatment and safety. Be sure to make and go to all appointments, and call your doctor if you are having problems.
- Call the office the next day to schedule a follow-up appointment for _____ week(s) from today.

Contact your doctor if your child experiences any of the following:

- Bright red bleeding from the nose or mouth. Spitting up fresh blood or swallowing a lot may be signs of bleeding.
- Vomit that is brownish or looks like coffee grounds.
- Persistent vomiting or dehydration.
- Pain that is not controlled by the suggested pain medication.
- Severe or increasing neck stiffness.

- Persistent fever ($>38.5^{\circ}\text{C}$ / 101°F) despite the use of fever medications.
- Difficulty breathing.

**For postoperative questions or concerns, please contact our
Pediatric ENT Nurse Practitioner at 780.407.1966
weekdays (Monday to Friday) from 7:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.**

If you have problems that you cannot resolve, and you are unable to reach the doctor or nurse practitioner, please be sure to take your child to the nearest emergency department