

Child Post-Operative Instructions for the Tonsillectomy

What to expect each day:

First 12-24 hours feel relatively well secondary to local (i.e. numbing medications) used at the time of surgery.

Day 2-6 – Sore throat, fever, lethargic- it is critical during this period that the child drinks a lot of fluids, eating is variable.

Day 7 –Will start to feel better, may not be 100% but improved.

Day 8-14- Children start to feel “back to normal”, so still maintain light activity, soft diet, may return to school but no physical education until after two weeks.

1. **Appointment:** Your physician will advise you when to schedule your follow-up appointment after your surgery. Please keep this appointment so the physician can make sure your throat is healing properly.
2. **Activity:** Encourage rest and quiet activities for the first week (TV, reading, cards, and board games). Sleep is an important part of the recuperative period. Avoid strenuous activity and sports for 2 weeks. It is common to be tired and need to sleep while taking pain medication for two weeks.
3. **Medication:** A prescription for pain medication will be given; take as directed. If you do not need the prescribed medication and want to take over-the-counter medications, such as acetaminophen (Tylenol), you may do so. Ibruprofen use may be allowed; please discuss with your physician first. If the pain medication is not effective please call the office. It is common to have a considerable sore throat, The most significant pain usually occurs from days 2-7 after surgery then decreases. You may also experience sharp pains going to the ears after the surgery. Narcotics can cause severe constipation. If you are taking narcotics please take a stool softener daily i.e: Colace. If you don't have a bowel movement in two days take Miralax.
4. **Diet:** During the first two weeks you should follow a soft diet: ices, popsicles, jell-o, soft cooked scrambled eggs, mashed potatoes etc. You should avoid crispy foods (pretzels, popcorn, potato chips, etc.), excessively hot beverages, spicy foods, or citrus juices (orange juice or grapefruit juice) for the first 7-10 days. Milk products (ice cream, custards, milk, or milkshakes) can be added once you are swallowing well. It is not uncommon for patients to lose 5-10 pounds after surgery.

5. **Temperature:** Low grade fevers are common, therefore staying hydrated is very important. You must drink enough fluids to prevent dehydration and fever (minimum of 2 liters or 68 ounces per day). If temperature is over 101 degrees orally and does not respond to medication, and increased fluids call the office.
6. **Bleeding:** There may be some bleeding and increased pain in the tonsil area 4-7 days after surgery. If you have bleeding rinse your mouth with ice water mixed with Hydrogen Peroxide (half and half) and spit it out. If the bleeding does not stop after 5 minutes or is excessive, call the office or go to the emergency room immediately.
7. **Additional Information:** There is usually a bad odor to the breath until healing has occurred. It does not mean infection. Brushing your teeth and tongue, as well as gently rinsing with mild salt water several times a day, may be helpful. The white patches in the back of the throat are moist scabs covering the tonsil area and does not mean there is an infection. Antibiotics are typically not indicated. Throat clearing and coughing should be avoided as this could cause bleeding.

**PLEASE DO NOT HESITATE TO CALL OUR OFFICE IF YOU HAVE ANY
QUESTIONS OR PROBLEMS. 410-760-8840**