



POST-OP INSTRUCTIONS

Tonsillectomy

(with or without adenoidectomy)

What to Expect After Surgery

- **Pain:** You should expect throat and ear discomfort after surgery. Tylenol® is often all that is needed for mild post-operative pain. You should avoid aspirin and NSAIDs such as Motrin®, Advil®, and Aleve® (*see below*). If Tylenol® is not sufficient to control the pain, you should use the post-operative pain medication prescribed by your doctor.
- **Nasal congestion:** Since the adenoids reside at the back of the nose, nasal congestion can result after surgery. An over-the-counter nasal saline spray can be used as much as necessary, and will provide significant symptomatic relief.
- **Halitosis:** Bad breath is often noticed following surgery. This is normal and will improve over 2-3 weeks as healing takes place.
- **Fatigue:** You can expect to feel very tired for the first week after surgery. This is normal and most patients plan on taking at 3-7 days off of work to recover. Every patient is different and some return to work sooner.

What to Avoid After Surgery

- **Activity:** You should avoid straining, heavy lifting (> 20 lbs) and exertion after. Parents of young children should try their hardest to create an environment that is conducive to rest (eg TV watching, reading, etc). You can resume 50% of your normal activity at 1 week after surgery and your normal routine 2 weeks after surgery.
- **Aspirin or Non-steroidal Anti-inflammatory (NSAIDs) medications:** Aspirin and NSAIDs such as Motrin®, Advil®, and Aleve® should be stopped 2 weeks prior to surgery and avoided after your procedure unless directed otherwise by your physician.

Postoperative Care Instructions

- **Diet:** Dehydration is one of the most common issues following surgery. Before surgery, stock up on your favorite items to drink. For children Pedialyte® is a good option and for adults Gatorade® or equivalent works well. Drinks that have no red color/dye are recommended as this may make it difficult to assess for a postoperative bleed. Citric acid-containing and carbonated beverages can cause discomfort and should be avoided. Generally, full liquids and soft foods are well-tolerated after surgery. Examples include milk shakes, ice cream, pasta, mashed potatoes, pudding, and baby food. Trying more solid food is ok if desired.
- **Oral hygiene:** Brushing the teeth with a soft tooth brush while taking care to avoid the back of the throat is allowed. Mouthwash will not harm this surgical site however will cause discomfort.

When to Call After Surgery

- Fever up to 101°F is normal the first several days after surgery. If this persists for > 2 days or if the fever will not break using traditional over-the-counter medications, call and notify the office for additional recommendations
- Bleeding more than 2 teaspoons following surgery should be reported. This may require a trip to the emergency department to ensure proper evaluation and treatment
- Decrease in urinary output
- Severe diarrhea
- Any other concerning signs/symptoms or other questions that may arise