

## 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