



Post-Operative Instructions Tonsillectomy and Adenoidectomy

1. **PAIN** – is variable but usually significant with tonsillectomy. Do not perform or allow children any exercise for 2 weeks, as this will increase the pain as well as the risk of bleeding. Do not plan any projects during the first 2 weeks post-operatively. Take pain medication prescribed with at least some food in your stomach – remember, the first night will likely bring some nausea from the general anesthetic, therefore no large meals. Pre-medicate with a viscous lidocaine gargle or Tetracaine lollipop prior to eating, after which, take a dose of the liquid pain medication prescribed (Lortab® or Tylenol® with codeine). Most importantly, **you must continue to drink fluids**. Post-operative dehydration may result in an admission to the hospital for intravenous (IV) fluids!
2. **REST** – as above. No exercise or excessive bending or lifting as this will increase pain and the risk of bleeding.
3. **BLEEDING** – is the most dangerous risk following tonsillectomy. The critical times are the first 24 hours and 7-10 days following surgery (when the scabs fall off). Expect some bloody mucous from the nose and the back of the throat, especially during the first 24 hours. Abnormal bleeding would be filling a Kleenex in 1-2 minutes or coughing up large blood clots. **Call Dr. Jungkeit immediately at the number below** for further instructions if bleeding such as this occurs. Ice packs to the throat (children, teenagers and adults) and gargling with **ice water** (adults and teenagers) may decrease the bleeding while awaiting a return call from Dr. Jungkeit or the Physician on call. **DO NOT take Aspirin, Aspirin containing products, Ibuprofen, Advil®, Motrin®, Vitamin E, Gingko or any blood-thinning medication for 2 weeks** after surgery.
4. **EXPECT** – throat pain to last at least 12-14 days. This may be slightly shorter in children or slightly longer in adults and teenagers. Also expect **ear pain** to occur in almost every case. This is known as referred pain, due to the main nerve supplying the throat stimulating a nerve branch supplying the ear canal. A low grade fever (101° F or below) is normal within 10 days after surgery. If the fever is 102° F or above, call Dr. Jungkeit for further instructions. Adenoidectomy patients may have foul-smelling breath for approximately 10 days post-operatively.
5. **DIET** – **Soft, cool, NON-RED foods, and no drinking through straws for 2 weeks** will help to minimize the risk of post-operative bleeding for tonsillectomy patients. (Red foods may look like bleeding.) **Strictly follow the post-tonsillectomy diet, as this will decrease the risk of post-operative bleeding.**
6. **ACTIVITY**- No exercise or exertion for 2 weeks. Patient is not to ride in a motor vehicle for 9 days after surgery date, with exception of transportation home from surgery. Children may return to daycare or school 9 days post-operatively. No vigorous playground activity or participation in physical education for an additional 5 days after returning to daycare or school. Adults may return to work 9 days post-operatively, although if physically strenuous duties are required, light duty assignments will be necessary for an additional 5 days after returning to work.

Revised 8/11