

## POSTOPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS FOR TONSILLECTOMY WITH OR WITHOUT ADENOIDECTOMY



Tonsillectomy and adenoidectomy is performed under general anesthesia. After surgery, the patient will typically spend around two hours in recovery before being discharged home. Patients under 3 years of age will usually spend one night in the hospital and be discharged the following day.

**Pain control:** You will be advised to take either over the counter or prescription pain medication after surgery. Children are usually treated with over the counter Children's Motrin Suspension according to the child's age, weight, and the label instructions. Adults are usually given a prescription for pain medication in liquid or pill form. Pain is not usually very bad in the first 24 to 48 hours after surgery. Pain may increase on days 3 through 5 before decreasing again. Most patients can return to work or school one week after surgery.

**Activity:** Avoid strenuous activity for 10 days after surgery. Adults should not drive while taking prescription pain medications.

**Diet:** You may advance to a general diet as tolerated. It is a good idea to start with cool, soft, bland foods (ice cream, yogurt) and advance from there. Ice cream, Jell-O and ice pops are great for children and may reduce pain. Avoid dry, sharp foods such as chips or crusty bread. Do not worry if you or your child do not want to eat much in the days after tonsillectomy. Focus on hydration and appetite will return. Drinking small amounts frequently throughout the day is a good strategy.

### **Things to expect:**

1. Low-grade fever (<101 F) is common after tonsillectomy and adenoidectomy and should decrease with ibuprofen or Tylenol.
2. Ear pain is normal after tonsillectomy and is not a sign of ear infection.
3. The throat will have a white or yellow coating after surgery. This is scab and will resolve in the weeks after surgery. It is not a sign of infection.
4. Patients undergoing adenoidectomy may have bad breath or a foul smell from the nose for a week after surgery.

### **Reasons to call:**

1. Fever greater than 102 F, especially if it does not decrease with ibuprofen or tylenol.

2. Bleeding is rare after tonsillectomy. Call our office or go to the emergency department for any red blood in the mouth after surgery. Bleeding can occur up to 2 weeks after surgery.
3. Dehydration - Call if your child will not take any fluids or if there are any signs of dehydration. These include dry mucous membranes, sunken eyes, decreased or absent urine output, dark urine.