

Head and Neck Surgery – Ear, Nose, Throat & Allergy Specialists

The Center for Surgical Care

Post-operative Instructions for Tonsillectomy

After Tonsillectomy, expect a significant sore throat. In addition, you will frequently hear complaints of ear pain (this is referred throat pain) beginning approximately five to seven days after the procedure. You may experience a low-grade fever after the procedure. **Encourage patient to increase fluids if persistent fever greater than 101.5° occurs. If fever does not subside this should be reported to the doctor.** You may notice that the voice sounds overly nasal for several days to weeks after the surgery. This should decrease as the swelling of the palate decreases.

In the back of the mouth, where the tonsils were, you will notice white patches. The white patches will be present for two to three weeks. Until the whitish patches have disappeared, it is recommended that you refrain from giving any fruit juices, specifically orange juice, cranberry juice and pineapple juice are high in citric acid and should be avoided. Almost all other liquids are acceptable, including sodas and sports drinks.

In terms of solid food, there are no restrictions. If a hamburger or other solids are requested on the first day, it is alright to offer that food, if, on the other hand, the patient does not wish any solid foods for five to seven days, this is likewise acceptable. However, drinking is very important. Drinking is most comfortable if fluids are offered approximately one hour after pain medication has been given. For the first few days after surgery, it is recommended to give the pain medication every four hours or so, even if there is no complaint of pain. It is sometimes beneficial to awaken the patient during the first night or two to continue giving the pain medications every four hours.

There may be vomiting on the first day or two after surgery. If you see old, maroon-colored blood in with the material vomited, this is acceptable. If, however, you see bright red blood with vomiting, and this lasts for more than one minute, you should call our office. You will be able to reach a physician twenty-four hours a day by calling our office number.

In general, it is recommended that doing nothing strenuous for the first two weeks after surgery. For school-age children, this translates to no school for one week and no gym for two weeks. During the summer, you should use your best judgment concerning activity. For adults, you should not return to work for one to two weeks after surgery, and should do nothing strenuous for two weeks.

Thank you, and please do not hesitate to call our office if you have any further questions.