



Pediatric Tonsil and Adenoid Surgery Post-Op Instructions

Dr. Justin Elder
Cape ENT
302-703-4025

Diet

Fluid intake is very important in the first few days after tonsillectomy. Apple juice, water, ice chips, popsicles, Jell-O and other soft, non-abrasive foods should be offered during the first few days. Avoid orange juice and grapefruit juice as well as toast, pizza, cookies, crackers and other foods with rough edges. Gatorade, milkshakes or milk, smoothies and even ice cream may be offered if your child can tolerate them.

If your child refuses to drink because of pain, make sure they are taking their medication as recommended by the doctor, and continue to encourage liquids. We cannot stress enough the importance of pushing liquids after surgery.

If your child has nausea or vomiting after surgery, it should go away within a day. Once the nausea and vomiting subside, give your child only sips of clear liquid.

Diet may be advanced as tolerated to include any non-spicy, non-irritating foods after two or three day. Usually, after the first week, the diet may be advanced to include all foods.

What to expect

Use over the counter Tylenol or Ibuprofen as recommended by manufacture every four to six hours for the first week for pain. Give pain medicine while awake, do not skip doses.

Blood-tinged nasal drainage and/or blood tinged sputum for two to three days following the operation is normal. If any significant bright red bleeding occurs from either the nose or mouth, and this occurs for longer than 15 minutes, go the emergency room.

Bad breath is common during the healing process. It will subside within seven to ten days after surgery.

Ear pain is a frequent occurrence following surgery. This is most likely referred pain from the tonsil area and rarely indicates ear infection.

The white or gray patches on the tonsillar areas are not a sign of infection. These are the healing membranes, which will fall off in seven to ten days after the operation. When the white membrane separates from the tonsillar bed, there may be a bit of fresh bleeding. This usually resolves within a few minutes. If the blood flow continues beyond 15 minutes, call your physician or go to the emergency room.

A humidifier in the bedroom will reduce pain by preventing the throat from drying. This is particularly true during the winter months, when dry forced air or electric heat is used.

A fever up to 101.5°F often occurs during the first 48 hours after a tonsillectomy. Adequate liquid intake will usually take care of this.

Plan for your child to be absent from school or daycare for up to a week after a tonsillectomy, and at least two to three days after an adenoidectomy. Please have your child refrain from vigorous activity for the two weeks after surgery. Travel is not recommended for the first two weeks after surgery.