



AFTER TONSILLECTOMY AND UVULOPALATOPHARYNGOPLASTY

INSTRUCTIONS AND EXPECTATIONS

1. You will be discharged the day of surgery (approximately 5 hours after surgery) unless you live out of town, had the UPPP (snoring operation) or the doctor advises otherwise. You will need to have someone drive you home after surgery. It is an absolute rule that you cannot drive yourself.
2. Expect a moderate amount of throat and ear pain during your 7 thru 10 day healing course. The pain may vary from day to day being possibly worse on the 3rd or 4th day. It is normal for the pain to fluctuate. You will be given a liquid pain medicine to help the pain and it is best to take the pain medicine with something (food and drink) in your stomach. Taking pain medicine on an empty stomach may cause nausea.
3. It is normal to experience a mild amount of nausea the day of surgery. If this nausea causes excessive vomiting, you should contact the doctor for medicine to treat the nausea (i.e., you vomit more than 3 times).
4. It is normal to have ear pain after tonsillectomy – even 7 to 10 days afterward. This is not an ear infection and you do not need to call the doctor for this. Just take the pain medication prescribed to you.
5. Do not take anti-inflammatory medicines for pain 2 weeks before or 2 weeks after surgery such as aspirin, Motrin (ibuprofen), or any other anti-inflammatories. Taking these medicines thin the blood and may lead to a serious bleeding complication after surgery. You should not take these medicines for at least 2 weeks after surgery. Take only the medicines your doctor prescribes you.
6. The most important thing to look for after tonsillectomy is bleeding. This can occur anytime in the first two weeks after surgery. A little blood in the mucous is acceptable. If you have a lot of bright red

blood from your mouth or you vomit a lot of dark coffee ground appearing substance from your stomach, this is a sign of excessive and dangerous bleeding. If this occurs you should begin rinsing your throat with ice cold water as this may slow or stop the bleeding. If this does not stop the bleeding within 15 minutes, you should be taken to the nearest emergency room and have them call your doctor. It is not uncommon to have a little blood from the mouth between days 6 to 10 after surgery when the scab is dissolving. Remember – bleeding after tonsillectomy can be dangerous and even fatal if not attended to promptly!

7. It is very important to take in as much cold liquids as possible after tonsillectomy to avoid dehydration. You can try Gatorade, water, juices, popsicles, and other clear liquids the day of surgery. You can have ice cream, milk shakes, soups, and other full liquid the second day. After this you can progress your diet onto soft foods such as scrambled eggs, mashed potatoes, and soft meats. After 10 days, you can resume a normal diet.
8. If you develop a low grade fever (oral less than 101 degrees), this does not usually mean infection. It means you are dehydrated (not enough liquids in your body) and need to drink more liquids. You may take Tylenol for the fever but do not take anything else as it may lead to bleeding. Drink more liquids.
9. You can reach the doctor night or day by calling the office. If it's after hours and there is an emergency, call the office and that will give you the number to the doctor's exchange which will contact the doctor and call you back. If there is excessive bleeding, proceed to the nearest hospital emergency room, and they will call your doctor.
10. Call the office to make a routine appointment to be seen about one week after surgery.

I have read, understand, and retained a copy of these postoperative instructions.

Signature _____