

## Post-Operative Instructions: Tonsillectomy / Adenoidectomy

### WHAT TO EXPECT:

- Throat pain is to be expected after a tonsillectomy. Most patients also have pain in their ears following a tonsillectomy. This does not mean that the ears are infected. The discomfort may be worse three to four days after surgery and again one week after the surgery as the scabs are falling off. Scabbing will appear as a thick, white coating on the sides of the throat.
- There is usually a foul odor to the patient's breath.
- You may experience some taste disturbance following surgery. This usually subsides after 4 to 6 weeks.
- There will be discomfort when yawning.
- A low grade fever of 99 to 100 degrees is frequently seen.
- Follow-up appointment 3 weeks after the surgery.

### ACTIVITY:

- Activity can be generally increased as the patient tolerates it. Strenuous activities should be avoided for two weeks.
- Leaving town should be avoided for two weeks.

### DIET:

- Liquids should be actively encouraged. The more a patient swallows, the less pain they have in their throat. It is also very important, particularly in children, to take in a large amount of liquid in the first week following a tonsillectomy to prevent dehydration.
- Patients who resume a more normal diet seem to do better.
- Patients may have some nausea following anesthesia, therefore, clear liquids should be given initially. If there is no nausea or as it subsides, then soft foods and even semi-solid and solid foods can be added to the diet as the patient is able to swallow them.
- Foods such as popcorn, potato chips, and tortilla chips, or anything that might scratch the tonsillectomy site, should be avoided for the first two weeks after surgery.
- Drinks with citric acid (orange juice) should also be avoided for the first two weeks.
- Chewing gum and eating pretzels helps with the pain and should be encouraged.

### PAIN CONTROL:

- A prescription for pain medication will be given to the patient before surgery to have available after surgery. These medications should be taken as directed. The pain medication should be given at regular intervals as prescribed to help keep the pain controlled. Swallowing will be easiest about ½ hour after taking the pain medication.
- An ice collar or compress to the neck is soothing if desired.
- Chewing gum helps relax the throat muscles, decreasing the pain.
- Coughing, hacking and clearing of the throat are to be avoided.
- Motrin, Ibuprofen and aspirin products should be avoided for 3 weeks after surgery.

### COMPLICATIONS:

- If bleeding occurs, the first thing to do is have the patient vigorously rinse with ice water and spit out. This will cause minor bleeding to subside in just a few minutes. If bleeding persists, the ENT physician should be contacted.
- If a fever develops above 101.9 degrees the ENT physician should be contacted.
- Should a complication develop, contact our office by calling **801-566-8304**. **After regular hours, the doctor may be reached by calling 801-596-6665**. If you are unable to reach the doctor go to the nearest ER and the hospital and will contact the doctor.