



15900 W. 127th St., Suite 210, Lemont, IL 60439
(630) 243-4505

Post-Operative Instructions for Tonsillectomy & Adenoidectomy

Diet: A clear liquid diet (apple juice, water, Gatorade) should be maintained after surgery until your child is no longer drowsy and does not feel nauseated. When this is the case, you may gradually increase their diet to soft foods like ice cream, yogurt, or applesauce. Please avoid any food items that are hard or have sharp edges (chips, crackers, nuts). Your child may not want to eat during the first week. That's okay as long as your child is drinking enough fluids (about 48 ounces per day). Avoid hot liquids and acidic liquids (orange juice, soda pop). The more fluids they drink, the better they will feel even if it hurts to swallow. I recommend taking small sips every 5-10 minutes instead of trying to drink an entire glass of fluid at one time. Popsicles and ice cream count as fluids. Your child may resume a normal diet after seven days.

Pain: Your child will complain of throat discomfort and may also have ear pain. This is normal after surgery and can last anywhere from 7 to 14 days. Please use the pain medication every 4 hours for the first 2-3 days after surgery even if your child is not complaining of pain. This will keep the pain manageable and will not allow it to get overwhelming for your child. After 3 days, you may give the pain medication when it is requested. The pain medication contains acetaminophen (Tylenol) so be careful about giving additional Tylenol. Please do not use Aspirin or Motrin/Advil for pain as this can cause bleeding. The worst days for pain is the 3rd -5th day after surgery as this is when swelling is the most. Your child may have a low-grade fever (<100 °F) for the first few days after surgery and this is usually due to decreased fluid intake and activity after surgery. If your child's temperature is above 102 °F, please call Dr. Go.

Bleeding: Watch for postoperative bleeding. Bleeding is the most common complication after tonsillectomy. A very small amount of blood may be seen in the saliva or nasal secretions the night after surgery, but you should not see any bright, red blood from your child's mouth or nose. The most common times for bleeding after surgery are the initial 24 hours and 7-10 days after the operation. If you see bleeding, have your child gargle gently with ice-cold water. If you still see bleeding, call Dr. Go immediately or go to the nearest emergency room.

Bad breath: The tonsil area will have a foul-smelling whitish material covering them. This is not infection but the way a scab looks inside the mouth. This is normal and will slough off on its own after 7-10 days. Please do not try to remove it as this could cause bleeding. The breath will return to normal in about 2 weeks.



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Your child can brush his/her teeth gently starting the day after surgery but be careful not to touch the tonsil area.

Activity: Your child should not do any activity that would raise his/her heart rate. Activity should be limited for the first 7 days after the operation. Rest and increased fluid intake should be the priority during this time period. Most children can return to school after 7 days from the operation, however, each child is different and should not return to school until they are feeling almost normal. Dr. Go is happy to provide any notes or excuse for time missed away from school or work

Follow-up: A post-operative check should be scheduled for approximately 4 weeks after surgery. If you have any questions about your child's recovery, please do not hesitate to call Dr. Go at (630) 243-4505.