



DISCHARGE INSTRUCTIONS

Tonsillectomy (and Adenoidectomy)

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What should we expect after anesthesia?

- Tonsillectomy involves a brief anesthesia, typically 20-60 minutes. Patients may be quite irritable for several hours after surgery. If sedatives were given, some patients will remain sleepy for much of the day. Nausea and vomiting is occasionally seen and usually resolves by the evening of surgery – even without therapy.

What can I or my child eat after surgery?

- Most patients, because of throat pain prefer liquids or soft foods for 5-10 days after surgery. Either cool or warm foods are acceptable. Dairy products may be taken, if desired. Patients may eat more solid foods as tolerated, although crispy or brittle foods (chip, pretzels, etc.) should be avoided until healing is complete. Favorite foods include popsicles, ice cream, frozen drinks (slushes, etc.) and Gatorade is acceptable.
- Chewing gum or bubble gum encourages swallowing and saliva flow, and may even speed up the healing.
- Avoid acidic or citrus products such as orange juice – they burn!
- Avoid using straws when drinking.

How active can I or my child be after surgery?

- Vigorous exercise should be avoided for 12-14 days after surgery.
- Baths, showers, even light swimming are acceptable.
- Many patients have reduced energy levels until their pain decreases and they are taking in more nourishment and calories.

What medications are used after surgery?

- Pain medication such as Tylenol with codeine or Hydrocodone is often (though not always) prescribed for pain.

Tonsillectomy is a painful procedure.

- Pain medications help, but do not completely alleviate the discomfort. Pain may last up to 2 weeks and is usually worse on days 3-7.
- Something like Tylenol with Codeine is often (but not always) prescribed. If nausea or stomach pains develop, the codeine may be the cause; so stop the codeine and take over the counter pain medication such as Tylenol (acetaminophen).
- Do not use ibuprofen, Advil, Nuprin, Naprosyn, Aleve, Aspirin, or Excedrin. They may increase the chance of bleeding.

Other medications

- Continue other medications you or your child has been on prior to surgery.
- If you or your child is a diabetic, make sure you have discussed your diabetic medication with your doctor.

When should we make an appointment?

- 3-4 weeks after surgery – to make sure healing has been complete and normal. If you do not have an appointment, please call 1-620-820-5843 or 1-417-347-8301 or 1-800-440-4905 to schedule your appointment.

What can we expect after surgery?

- As previously mentioned, most patients have significant amount of pain after tonsillectomy with pain resolving 5-12 days after surgery. Older children and adults seem to have more discomfort.
- Most patients can go home the day of surgery.
- Ear pain: many patients will complain of ear aches after tonsillectomy. This is very common after tonsillectomy. This is caused by pain coming from the throat and not the ears. Give pain medications and encourage fluid intake.
- Fever: many patients have a low-grade fever after tonsillectomy – up to 102 degrees Fahrenheit. Give Tylenol and plenty of fluids. Higher prolonged fever should be reported to your surgeon.
- Bad looking and bad smelling throat: most tonsillar areas (after surgery) are covered with gray/white exudates – sometimes with bad breath – for up to 3 weeks. There will be some redness and swelling as well. The uvula (the thing hanging down in the middle) is occasionally swollen.

When should we call the doctor?

- Bleeding: significant bleeding is rare. More than a few drops of bleeding should be reported. If bleeding persists, ice water mouth washes may help. For severe bleeding, go to the nearest emergency room or call 911.
- Dehydration: if there has been little or no liquids taken for 24 hours, notify your surgeon. Signs of dehydration include lethargy, and reduced or very concentrated urine output.
- High fever: temperatures greater than 102 degrees, or when accompanied by cough or difficulty breathing, should be reported.
- Pain: pain that is not controlled by pain medication(s).

How do I notify my doctor of problems or concerns?

- During office hours please contact Dr. McClintick at his office. After hours or over the weekend please call 1-417-347-1111 and have Dr. McClintick paged.

Important!

In case of an emergency call 911 or go to the nearest emergency room for examination and treatment.

