

## Post op Instructions: Tonsillectomy and Adenoidectomy (T&A)

### Diet:

After surgery it is not uncommon to have some nausea and occasionally vomiting due to anesthesia. Start out with liquids and gradually introduce soft foods as desired. Below is an example of dietary recommendations:

*Days 1-3:* Liquids mostly: Non-acidic beverages, flat carbonated beverages, room temperature broth, Ensure, Gatorade, popsicles, jello, milkshakes, sherbert, etc.

*Days 3-10:* Semi-liquid to soft diet: Jello, yogurt, ice cream, pudding, mashed potatoes, scrambled eggs, oatmeal, etc.

Encourage liquids frequently throughout the day, especially if not tolerating solids yet. Keeping patients hydrated speeds the healing process and decreases pain. Stay on a soft food diet for 1-2 weeks after surgery.

Foods and drinks to avoid: Hot foods, spicy or highly seasoned foods, dry and crunchy foods like potato chips, nuts, crackers, and dry toast. Avoid orange juice, grapefruit juice, tomato juice and other acidic drinks for a week, as they may hurt the throat.

### Medications:

A pain medication for 7-10 days will be prescribed to you after surgery usually in the form of hydrocodone or codeine. These medications often cause drowsiness, constipation and sometimes nausea and vomiting, especially if taken on an empty stomach. If you experience continued vomiting, call the office and a medicine may be called in to your pharmacy to relieve nausea and vomiting. It is recommended that for the first few days, pain medicine be given on a routine basis, every 4-6 hours, even during the nighttime so that the pain does not become too overwhelming. Drink plenty of fluids to prevent constipation. Switch to over the counter Tylenol when the pain is mild. Some children who cannot tolerate prescribed pain medications may do better with Tylenol (acetaminophen) and Advil (ibuprofen) interchangeably. In this case, you may give the proper dose of Tylenol followed by Advil 3 hours later, followed by Tylenol in 3 hours, etc.

### General Instructions:

- o Avoid heavy lifting, straining, or vigorous exercise for 2 weeks. Children should avoid rough play for 2 weeks (no PE or recess).
- o Adults should not drive or operate any machinery for 24 hours while taking narcotics.
- o Avoid frequent coughing and clearing the throat.

- o Bad breath is common after T&A and improves with more fluid intake and time.
- o You will notice a white to yellow or grayish membrane on the sides of the throat. This is normal and does not indicate an infection. These "scabs" will slough off in about a week.
- o Nasal congestion and cough are commonly experienced after T&A.
- o Earache is expected after T&A and is not due to an ear infection, but to referred pain from the throat.
- o Occasionally children after adenoidectomy may have a temporary stiff neck and pink discharge from their nose. These will resolve with time.
- o Avoid taking aspirin or other blood thinners, which increase the possibility of bleeding. Talk to your doctor about when you should resume these medications. In general, most medications can be resumed after surgery.
- o Most patients will return to school or work in 1 week.
- o Most prescription pain medications cause drowsiness, so patients on pain medications should not operate heavy machinery, drive, or make important decisions.

### Fever:

A low grade fever is not uncommon after surgery. Take Tylenol as needed and encourage fluid intake. If the temperature remains above 102<sup>o</sup> F (39<sup>o</sup> C) and does not respond to Tylenol, call our office or go to the nearest emergency room. If the patient is unable to drink fluids despite pain medications and you notice a decrease in urination or lethargy, these may be signs that dehydration is occurring and IV fluids are required. In this case, call our office or go to the emergency room.

### Bleeding:

A small amount of blood tinged saliva is not uncommon after T&A. In rare occasions, bleeding can occur from the mouth. In approximately 2% of patients, this can occur about 7-10 days after surgery. Most resolve spontaneously. If this occurs, sit quietly and keep your head elevated, gargle gently with ice cold water and spit the blood out. If the bleeding does not stop promptly, call the office or go to the emergency room. **All emergency situations should be referred to St. David's North Austin Medical Center (12221 N. Mopac Expressway, 78758, 512-901-1000).**

### For Children:

Breathing complications with children after general

anesthesia rarely occur. The symptoms are croupy sounds when breathing in, noisy gasping sounds or abdominal tension with breathing. If this occurs, CALL 911.

**Follow up:**

A follow up appointment should be scheduled after surgery. Call the office if you don't have a post op appointment.