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## Post -Operative Instructions for Tonsillectomy

What should I expect after my Tonsillectomy?

1. When you had your pre-operative visit with me, we discussed your surgical procedure, as well as all of the surgical risks, which include bleeding during surgery, the risk associated with anesthesia, and possibilities of infection, etc.
2. We also discussed the possibility of delayed post-operative bleeding. This can occur seven to 14 days after the initial tonsillectomy. After surgery, an “eschar” or “scabs” (two white patches) form in the back of the throat. This “eschar” usually will slough or fall off after 10 to 14 days and will be replaced by normal tissue. However, if this tissue prematurely sloughs, some bleeding can occur. If this happens, **gently rinse the back of the throat with ice water, to control the bleeding. Call my office (during normal daytime hours), or notify my after hour emergency number (202) 726-7770), then come in to be seen as an emergency consultation or go to the nearest emergency room.**
3. You should restrict your activity for two to three days after surgery. You may then increase your activity as tolerated. Avoid all vigorous physical activity for two weeks after surgery (for example: no running, weight lifting, swimming, bicycle riding, etc.).
4. Your main complaint most likely will be post-operative pain. I gave you a prescription for pain medication, so please follow the instructions. When your pain is minimal, you can switch to regular Tylenol (acetaminophen). **Avoid ibuprofen, aspirin, or any aspirin-based product for two weeks after surgery.**
5. You may experience some ear pain after surgery. This represents referred pain from the throat. Do not be alarmed.
6. After surgery, I recommend that you chew gum several times a day. This helps to exercise your jaw and facilitates swallowing. It also helps to minimize the pain in your throat.

- 7.** One of the more frequent questions asked after a tonsillectomy is: “What can I eat?” Your diet should consist of soft foods. You should avoid citrus juices, spicy foods, and anything that is hard which may injure the throat (for example: avoid Doritos, potato chips, crispy fried foods, etc.) for the first twenty-four hours, I recommend that you eat ice chips, popsicles, ice cream, sherbet, Jell-O, yogurt, puddings, custards, pureed foods, oatmeal, etc. and that you gradually increase your diet to include mashed potatoes, soft vegetables, bread, soft pasta, broiled chicken, etc.
- 8.** You may run a low grade fever after surgery. Generally, this indicates some dehydration. So increase your fluid intake. If, however, you have a fever of 101 degrees Fahrenheit, for more than two to three days, notify my office or notify your pediatrician.
- 9.** You may find that taking your pain medication 30 minutes prior to meal time, facilitates swallowing.
- 10.** Please take all of your medication that has been prescribed to you, including your antibiotic.
- 11.** You can gently brush your teeth 2-3 times daily. Some physicians also advocate gargling with warm saline to minimize pain and discomfort. (Mix 1 tsp. of table salt with 1 quart of water.)
- 12.** Please schedule your postoperative follow-up appointment for 14 days after surgery. If you have any additional questions, call my office at one of the above numbers.