

18 August 2020

Paediatric Tonsillectomy

Post-Operative Care Instructions Following Tonsillectomy

The following instructions will help you know what to expect in the days following surgery. Do not, however, hesitate to call if you have any questions or concerns.

Physical Activities

After this surgery, children should rest but may play inside after one or two days and may be outside after three or four days, if they feel up to it. Strenuous physical activity following surgery is discouraged. Children may return to school whenever comfortable and when they are not needing regular daily pain relief; 10-14 days is not unusual.

Diet

The more your child eats and drinks, the sooner the pain will subside. Water, apple juice and grape juice are excellent sources of liquid. Soft foods such as ice cream, yoghurt, pudding, apple sauce and jelly, should also be encouraged. If they are able to eat normal foods then that is absolutely fine.

Pain and Halitosis

For the first seven days (occasionally up to 14 days) following surgery, pain is to be expected. This can usually be controlled with liquid paracetamol (4 x day) and ibuprofen (3 x day). There will usually be a script for a stronger painkiller (oxycodone) to be used if pain is still not controlled. Check the prescription for dosages to administer. Avoid using this for the first 24 hours after surgery.

Ear pain, especially with swallowing is also a common occurrence; it is not an ear infection but due to referred pain from the surgery. Treat it as above. Occasionally a stiff neck may occur. Please call if it becomes excessively painful.

Bad breath (halitosis) is normal and is a consequence of the healing process.

Fever

A low-grade fever (less than 38 degrees) following surgery may occur and should be treated with Paracetamol. If the fever persists (more than two days) or if a higher fever develops, call. Fever may indicate that you have not taken in sufficient fluids or may have an infection.

Bleeding

Post-operative bleeding is unusual, but it can occur up to two weeks after surgery. Most bleeding is minor and you may only see a little coating of blood on the tongue. Watch for spitting, coughing, or vomiting of blood. Because of this risk, its important you do not travel more than 30 minutes from the Gold Coast or Brisbane for 2 weeks after surgery. If there is significant bleeding following surgery, call immediately or present to The Qld Children's Hospital where there is paediatric ENT support 24 hours a day.

Follow up

A follow-up appointment with your ENT Clinics doctor will be made for approximately 2-4 weeks after Surgery.

After Hours Assistance

If you have any urgent post surgery concerns after hours, the on call ENT Surgeon can be contacted on: 0499 330 021.

The after hours number does not accept SMS messages, images or appointment bookings