
Tonsillectomy Post-Op Instructions

ENT of Athens

1. Staying hydrated is the most important thing after surgery. Be sure to drink lots of liquids: water, Gatorade, popsicles, Pedialyte, clear juices, or crushed ice. Carbonated and citrus juices may hurt your throat. Dairy is acceptable but may tend to increase mucoid secretions.
2. Dehydration increases the risk of bleeding. Signs of dehydration include dry mouth, no tear production, low grade fever, very lethargic child, and urinating less than every 8 hours. Please notify your physician if you are worried about dehydration as you may need to be evaluated.
3. Soft foods may be started the day of surgery, such as oatmeal, eggs, mashed potatoes, Jell-O, applesauce, bananas, ice cream, macaroni, and soft vegetables. Avoid highly seasoned foods and very hot foods for 2 weeks. Do NOT eat any hard foods such as crackers, chips, hard toast, or bacon that can scratch the back of your throat for 2 weeks.
4. Sore throat may last for up to weeks or longer after surgery. Ear pain is also common, typically around 1 week after surgery. Coughing and throat clearing should be limited. Swallow your saliva to keep the throat moist. You may use a cool mist humidifier. Expect nasal congestion and runny nose for up to 1 week.
5. The tongue and tonsil area are usually coated with a gray-white membrane. This is normal and does not signify infection. Teeth may be brushed the first day. To prevent scarring, after the third day, open your mouth as wide as possible and stick your tongue out as far as you can. Chewing gum will also help.
6. Children should avoid becoming overheated or tired for 2 weeks. They may return to school after 1 week, but no Physical Education for 2 weeks. Adults should avoid strenuous exercise or heavy lifting for 2 weeks. Exertion increases the risk of bleeding.
7. Bleeding is the most serious complication, and the highest risk period is 7-10 days after surgery (when scabs fall off). If bleeding occurs, call your physician immediately. **All bleeding is abnormal and MUST be evaluated by a physician. Report any bleeding or uncontrolled nausea and vomiting to your physician at 706-546-7908.**
8. Fluids, ice collar, and pain medication will help reduce fever and pain. Take only the prescriptions ordered by your physician. You use Ibuprofen/Motrin in addition to prescriptions as directed by your physician. Take care when using Tylenol along with prescribed pain medications that contain acetaminophen/Tylenol to avoid exceeding the daily limit of Tylenol.

PHILIP A. SHEFFIELD, MD J. EDWARD DEMPSEY, MD CHARLES M. MIXSON, MD
BYRON K. NORRIS, MD ELIZABETH H. KATZ, MD BLAKE KIMBRELL, MD