



NASHVILLE EAR, NOSE & THROAT CLINIC

STEVEN ENRICH, M.D. STEPHEN A. MITCHELL, M.D., F.A.C.S.
MITCHELL K. SCHWABER, M.D. MATTHEW SPEYER, M.D., P.C.

HOME CARE INSTRUCTIONS TONSILLECTOMY AND/OR ADENOIDECTOMY

The following instructions will help either a child or an adult recover as easily as possible from tonsillectomy and/or adenoidectomy. Taking good care of yourself or the child can prevent complications. It is very important that you read this information often and follow the instructions carefully while you are at home. Your doctor or nurse will be happy to answer any questions.

DIET

- * For the first 24 hours after surgery, it is more comfortable to drink only cold, non-irritating liquids because they are easier to swallow than solid food. These, liquids include water, non-irritating fruit juices such as apples, apricot, grape, peach, or pear, popsicles, Kool-Aid, and carbonated beverages that have lost the fizz.
- * Custard, pudding, Jell-o, ice cream, and yogurt are also easy to swallow and are recommended for better nutrition.
- * You may want to avoid citrus fruits and juices simply because they may be more painful to swallow.
- * After 24 hours, soft foods like soft meat or chicken, cooked eggs, soft vegetables, mashed potatoes, peaches, pears, apricots, applesauce, cooked cereals, and strained soups will probably not hurt the throat. It is o.k. To try any of them.
- * Drinking plenty of fluids is important. Adults should drink six 8-ounce glasses of liquid each day. A child should drink at least 1-2 tablespoons of liquid every 30 minutes.

Urine output is a sign of getting enough fluid. If urine appears dark yellow, drink more fluid. A child or adult urinating light yellow 4-5 times per day is probably getting enough fluid.

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St. Thomas Office
Medical Plaza East, Suite 400
4230 Harding Road
Nashville, Tennessee 37205
(615) 386-9089 · Fax (615) 386-2197



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ACTIVITY GUIDELINES

- * Strength will come back quickly. A person who has had a tonsillectomy and/or an adenoidectomy should do as much as comfortable without getting over-tired. Get your doctor's OK before participating in sports or exercise.
- * No hot tubs for the first week.
- * No sitting out in the sun for long periods of time for the first week. Getting overheated is not good.
- * Avoid people who have colds, the flu, or any lung or respiratory infection.

MOUTH CARE

- * Teeth should be brushed as often as before, preferably 2-3 times per day.
- * The mouth should be rinsed after each meal with water or mouth rinse. Be sure to use a mouth rinse which contains NO alcohol.
- * Do not gargle vigorously for three weeks.
- * DO NOT SMOKE.

THROAT DISCOMFORT / RELATED PAIN

- * The throat might hurt for several days. During the first 24 hours, it may be helpful to apply ice to the neck to reduce the discomfort. You can put the ice in a small ice bag or crush the ice and put it inside a rubber glove.

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- * A sore throat might be relieved by sucking on hard candy or chewing plain gum. Do not chew Aspergum!
- * The pain medicine which is prescribed should reduce pain. However, the pain medication rarely makes the pain go away entirely.
- * The throat might hurt more during sleep. This is because it is still during this time. Chewing a piece of gum before breakfast will help. Also, keep a glass of fluid beside the bed to sip through the night
- * Pain medication taken about one-half to one hour before meals will make eating less painful.
- * Pain might be worse on the fourth or fifth day after surgery than it was on the first or second day. This is due to separation of the protective membrane of the throat which leaves a raw surface. It is normal. Do not be alarmed.
- * An earache may develop after surgery. This is "referred pain" from the throat and is due to the close connections between the ear and the throat. The prescription pain medicine might relieve it. If you also have a fever, notify your doctor because it might be an infection.

MEDICINES TO AVOID

ASPRIN OR ASPIRIN-CONTAINING MEDICINES OR IBUPROFEN MEDICINES, SUCH AS ADVIL OR NUPRIN, CAN CAUSE AN INCREASE IN BLEEDING. If you have questions about a medicine that contains aspirin, ask your pharmacist.

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BLEEDING IN THE THROAT

It is rare, but occasionally people bleed after surgery. If there is bleeding from the throat any time after going home from the hospital, immediately sit up and hold a small piece of ice in the mouth. During this time, don't clear the throat forcefully. Notify your doctor immediately. You may need to return to the hospital emergency room.

WHITE PATCHES IN THE THROAT

White patches will form on the throat as it heals. This is normal and is not a sign of infection. They may last 10-12 days after the surgery. The breath will smell bad while the patches show. Eventually the patches will come off. When they do, the throat may bleed a little and be sore. If the bleeding continues, call your doctor.

RETURN APPOINTMENT

You will have a follow up appointment with the doctor approximately two weeks after surgery. Usually this return appointment is scheduled the same time as your surgery. If you don't have an appointment please contact the office at (615)386-9089.

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NOTIFY YOUR DOCTOR IF:

- * Bleeding does not go away after sitting up and holding ice in the mouth
- * Sharp pain which is not relieved by the pain medicine
- * A fever above 102°F which continues for more than 24 hours
- * Eating or drinking is impossible
- * Stools are black and tarry-looking. This is a sign of hidden bleeding and that blood is being swallowed

IMPORTANT PHONE NUMBERS

You may contact our office by calling (615)386-9089. A message center will answer your calls after hours.

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