

# Tonsillectomy with Adenoidectomy

## One Day Surgery • Post Operative Instructions



Children's  
of Alabama

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### What to Expect

- Your child's throat will be very sore for 7 to 10 days. Complaints of ear pain will often accompany tonsillectomy. Prescription pain medicine may be prescribed for pain. USE this medicine every 4 hours for the first five days, then use as needed for pain. Children's Motrin or Advil should be used between the prescription pain medicine doses for continuous pain relief. DO NOT use Children's Tylenol in addition to the prescription pain medicine.
- Your child will probably run a fever the first few days. Children's Motrin, Children's Advil or the prescription pain medication will help control this. The fever will be worse if your child does not have an adequate fluid intake and becomes dehydrated.
- Snoring and nasal congestion is common 5 to 7 days after surgery until the swelling goes away.
- A small amount of bleeding may occur from the mouth. Between the 7th and 10th day after surgery, the surgery site goes through the final phase of healing. At this time, your child may spit up a small amount of bloody mucous. If there is a large amount of bright red blood (more than 2 teaspoons) go to the nearest emergency room.
- Your child will have bad breath as the throat and adenoid sites heal. The odor comes from a white tissue that forms over the tonsil surgery site-this is not an infection. Children may brush their teeth after surgery, but this will not eliminate bad breath. This will clear in 7 to 10 days as the throat heals.
- Nausea and/or vomiting are common after surgery. Use the prescribed medications, if ordered, for nausea. If nausea occurs, treat with a clear liquid diet and advance as tolerated.
- Your child's voice may be high pitched after surgery. This is temporary and should return to normal as the throat heals.

### Diet

- Monitoring of fluid intake is very important. Liquids (i.e., popsicles, milkshakes, Gatorade) are the most important things for your child to have after surgery. Your child will be reluctant to swallow and may easily become dehydrated. Signs of dehydration include decreased urine output, no tears and dry mouth.
- Offer cool or room temperature fluids at least every 30 minutes to an hour; avoid acidic drinks, i.e., orange juice.
- Frequent small feedings of soft foods will be easy to swallow. Avoid foods with hard edges such as potato chips and pizza crusts. There are no limits to the food you may give your child. Let your child eat as tolerated.
- Weight loss is common the first week.

### Medication

- Complaints of ear pain will often accompany tonsillectomy. Prescription pain medicine may be prescribed for pain. USE this medicine every four hours for the first 5 days, then use as needed for pain. Children's Motrin or Advil should be used between the prescription pain medicine doses for continuous pain relief. DO NOT use Children's Tylenol in addition to the prescription pain medicine.
- Alternate the prescription pain medicine with Children's Motrin or Advil every two hours for adequate pain relief. After several days, plain Children's Tylenol with the Children's Motrin or Advil should be sufficient for pain control.
- For young children, usually less than 3 years of age, prescription pain medication may not be prescribed. Please alternate Children's Tylenol and Children's Motrin/Advil for pain relief.

### Activity

- Avoid any strenuous activity for 2 weeks. Your child may lack energy and tire easily. It is important for children to be in a home environment so they can rest and sleep as needed. Mild activity is fine as tolerated. Children usually are able to return to school in seven to 10 days after surgery, but should avoid rough play and contact sports for two full weeks after surgery.
- It is important for your child to stay close to home for about two weeks after surgery so any problems can be taken care of quickly.

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## Follow-Up

- THERE IS NO RETURN APPOINTMENT NEEDED FOR TONSILLECTOMY / ADENOIDECTOMY.  
YOU WILL RECEIVE A CALL FROM THE NURSE DURING THE POST-OP PERIOD.

## When to Call Your Doctor

- Report any evidence of bright red bleeding; bleeding occurs in amounts greater than 2 teaspoons of bright red blood, go to the nearest emergency room for evaluation.
- Temperature above 101 degrees that lasts longer than 24 hours.
- Excessive nausea, vomiting or any concerns regarding dehydration
- If voice has not returned to normal, or if snoring persists, 3 months after surgery.

## Physicians:

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Audie L. Woolley, MD, FACS

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W. Peyton Shirley, MD, FACS

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Telephone: (205) 638-4949 or for after routine office hours, call (205) 638-9100 and page the doctor on call for ENT.

For emergencies, call 911.

Tylenol was given at \_\_\_\_\_. You may repeat this dose at \_\_\_\_\_.

Parent/Guardian \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Nurse \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

One Day Surgery Center - Russell Campus | One Day Surgery Center - Children's South