

Post-op Tonsillectomy Instructions & What to Expect:

- 1. Recovery:** The most important thing to remember is that it takes a full 8-9 days before full recovery. Unlike recovery from other types of surgery, you don't necessarily feel better every subsequent day after surgery. Slight temperature to 101 is normal. In general, the pattern is as follows: pain sets in the night of surgery and the next morning, days 2-5 are up and down with no dramatic relief of pain. Ear pain (which is normal) may occur on day 5-6. Finally, the pain begins to subside on day 7 and by day 9 when you come in for the post-operative visit, you should feel 90% better. It takes that long!
- 2. Pain medications:** Begin taking the prescribed pain medication (Tylenol with codeine or Percocet) the night of surgery. You may take this every 4 hours throughout the post-op period. If the pain is not too severe, you may take regular Tylenol. Avoid medications such as Advil, Aleve, & Motrin as these can inhibit the clotting function of platelets.
- 3. Diet:** Drink lots of fluids (apple juice, water, Gatorade). Avoid citrus fluids and products as the acidity may irritate the throat. You may eat soft foods—as long as it's softer than macaroni & cheese, for example—and avoid abrasive foods such as granola bars and tortilla chips. Enjoy foods such as soup, yogurt, apple sauce, pudding, ice cream, ice pops, etc. Protein shakes and supplements such as Ensure are a good source of nutrition. Use your common sense!
- 4. Activities:** Take it easy until you see me in the office! Feel free to go for a walk, but don't run, bike, or raise your blood pressure until your first post-op visit.
- 5. What can go wrong?** The only thing we consider to be an emergency is bleeding. Blood tinged saliva is to be expected during the first week. What concerns us is a *mouthful of blood* or *heavy bleeding* that doesn't stop for more than a minute. If this were to occur (1 out of 50 experience this), immediately rinse your mouth with ice water (this puts the blood vessel into spasm and slows down the bleeding) and call us immediately (201.816.9800). If your call is not answered within 15 minutes and you are still bleeding, drive to the nearest emergency room.
- 6. Summary:** The recovery is not a lot of fun. You will lose weight from not eating and you will generally feel weak. Take it slow and easy. The voice may sound high pitched and squeaky the first 2 weeks. Don't worry, the voice will return to 'normal' when the healing is complete. If any questions arise, please call. BUT, the good news is: you are cured! The tonsils will never come back and you will never have this surgery done again! Congratulations!