

Tonsillectomy Post Operative Instructions

- Activity:** Rest quietly for 2-3 days. Sleep with 2-3 pillows or in a recliner, keeping your head elevated. You may return to work or school in 1-2 weeks, but with **no strenuous activity**. No gym, exercise, swimming, running, ball-playing or other strenuous activity for **two weeks**. This could cause bleeding. Avoid coughing, sneezing, clearing the throat or nose-blowing for two weeks as this can cause bleeding.
- Diet:** **Drink plenty of fluids (2-3 liters per day)**. Avoid straws or ‘sippy cups’ especially with thick drinks. Cold fluids are best to start, progress to a soft bland diet and gradually resume usual diet. Avoid citrus fruits and spicy meals for 2 weeks. Also avoid sharp, crunchy foods such as chips or pretzels. Allow hot foods to come to room temperature. Dizziness, headache, and constipation may occur. Increase fluid intake to minimize these symptoms.
- Mouth odor is common and drinking sufficient fluids will help relieve this. You may gently brush your teeth but not gargle.
- Pain:** Throat pain and earache are common after surgery. Take pain medications and antibiotics as ordered by your physician. Acetaminophen (Tylenol) may be used to manage pain. Confer with your physician regarding the use of Motrin, Advil or Ibuprofen products, before use. Prescription pain medications can cause stomach upset and constipation—a standard laxative or stool softener can be used if necessary. Plain Tylenol can be alternated with or used in place of prescription medications. An ice pack to the neck may also help with pain.
- Vomiting:** Occasionally, there may be nausea and/or vomiting from the anesthesia or swallowed blood that may resemble coffee grounds (dark brown color). If vomiting is severe or persistent call your physician. **If there is vomiting of bright red blood, call your physician immediately**. Bowel movements could be black or tarry for a few days due to swallowed blood.
- Bleeding:** You may cough or spit out blood-tinged mucous which is normal. **Bright red bleeding or blood clots are not normal**—small percentage of patients have bleeding at 5-10 days when the white scab over the operative site begins to separate. **If this happens call the doctor’s office immediately or go to the nearest Emergency Room to be evaluated**. Remain calm, keep your head elevated, and apply ice to the neck. You may also “rinse and spit” with ice water or suck on ice chips.
- Fever:** A temperature of 99°-101° orally may occur after surgery for 2-3 days. Drinking fluids, including Gatorade, will help this. If the fever persists, call your doctor.

CALL YOUR DOCTOR FOR THE FOLLOWING:

1. Bright red bleeding or blood clots from the mouth or nose
2. Vomiting that is persistent- this can cause dehydration
3. Fever over 101° persists more than two days
4. Pain not relieved by medication
5. Severe headache
6. Any other problems or concerns

If you are unable to reach a doctor by phone in an emergency, go directly to the emergency room. In cases of a large amount of bleeding, call 911.

Our office can be reached at **401-885-8484** for any postoperative concerns or questions.