

Tonsillectomy with or without Adenoidectomy Post Operative Instructions

What to Expect

Pain

- There is always pain after a tonsillectomy. Some experience earache due to referred pain. Discomfort tends to peak on day 4 or 5 and then improves. Fortunately the pain can usually be kept under control with regular pain relief.
- It is important to use pain relief medication regularly even when pain is mild for the first 5 days. The aim is to have sufficient pain relief so that drinking is reasonably comfortable. Eating may still be uncomfortable.
- Adenoidectomy (without tonsillectomy) is generally not particularly painful.

Fatigue

- The general anaesthetic, surgery and medications may cause some fatigue.
- It is important to take a full week to rest at home after surgery.
- Gentle activity is permissible in the second week but heavy lifting and strenuous exercise must be avoided for 3 weeks from surgery.

Nausea and vomiting

- It is common to experience nausea in the first 24 hours following a general anaesthetic.
- Please advise your nurse caring for you on the ward if you feel nausea and they will give you an anti-nausea medication through you intravenous drip.

What to Do

General Care

- Take it very easy at home for at least one week.
- It is very important to drink adequate fluids even if eating becomes difficult. When you become dehydrated the healing tonsil cavity has a tendency to become even more painful.
- If you are unable to drink for 24 hours you may need to come into hospital for some intravenous fluids. With regular pain relief this is rarely necessary.

Bleeding

- The tonsil wound heals via small new blood vessels growing into the area. Sometimes during the healing process these new fragile vessels can bleed.
- If bleeding starts and does not stop after one or two minutes you should go to your nearest emergency department for assessment.
- Most bleeding settles down quickly without the need to return to the operating theatre.

- Bleeding may occur up to two weeks following surgery.

Pain Relief

- You will be recommended paracetamol and oxycodone syrup. Both should be taken regularly and can be used every 6 hours.

Follow-up

- A post-operative appointment is usually made 2-4 weeks following surgery.
- Please feel free to contact me earlier with questions.

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