

TONSILLECTOMY AND ADENOIDECTOMY INSTRUCTIONS

Tonsillectomy and adenoidectomy are fairly routine and simple operations. Dangerous complications are uncommon, however, the postoperative discomfort as well as eating and drinking problems are often a concern. Here are some DO's and DON'T's that will hopefully help things go smoothly. While in some instances I may insist that the patient stay in the hospital overnight, in most cases tonsillectomy and/or adenoidectomy can be performed safely as an outpatient. However, remember that the health and safety of you or your child is my greatest concern – no patient is ever discharged until they are ready. I hope that this information will answer any questions you may have.

BEFORE SURGERY:

DO – Stop the use of aspirin, ibuprofen or other non-steroidal anti-inflammatory medications. Tylenol is okay.

DON'T – Have anything to eat or drink after midnight the night before your surgery. If your surgery is being done at St. Agnes Hospital or Howard County Hospital, see enclosed food guidelines.

DO – feel welcome to come into the operating room if your child is having surgery until they have fallen asleep (ONE PARENT ONLY).

AFTER SURGERY

DO – drink lots of liquids though citric juices are not recommended.

DO – feel free to eat any food. However, this is often not possible. Some patients have difficulty eating any solid food for several days but most people are able to start fairly quickly with soft and bland foods such as jello, oatmeal, mashed potatoes, applesauce, ect.. Avoid spicy or salty foods.

DO – take prescribed medication. You will be prescribed liquid pain medication and in most cases, antibiotics.

*****DO NOT TAKE ASPIRIN OR NON-STEROIDAL ANTI-INFLAMMATORIES*****

DO – expect some ear pain, bad breath, and increased mucous in the throat during the postoperative period.

DO – expect to see a white/yellow coating in the back of the throat – this is the normal appearance as the throat heals.

OVER

DO – expect a lowgrade fever for a few days after surgery.

DO – chew gum to help relax the muscles in the back of the throat.

DO – CALL IF THERE IS ANY BLEEDING

DON'T – exercise strenuously or lift heavy objects for two weeks.

ANSWERS TO OTHER COMMONLY ASKED QUESTIONS:

Swimming is allowed, however, vigorous exercise is not allowed.

Bathing or showering is allowed anytime.

MORE ABOUT BLEEDING:

Bleeding is the major complication of a tonsillectomy. Severe bleeding during the operation is very unusual and the need for blood transfusions is **EXTREMELY** small. However there is about a 2% risk of bleeding during the postoperative period. This is typically 5 to 7 days after surgery, usually is mild and stops within 10-20 minutes without treatment. However, sometimes, the bleeding does not stop and in rare circumstances, a patient needs to be taken back to the operating room to stop the bleeding.

Finally, Please call if you have additional problems or concerns.