



## POST-OPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS TONSILLECTOMY/ADENOIDECTOMY

### **Pain**

Most patients will experience significant post-operative pain, more from tonsillectomy than from adenoidectomy. Pain medication should be taken in the appropriate dosage when the patient gets up in the morning; this usually is the time when there is the most discomfort. Then take as needed throughout the day, following the guidelines on the label. Aspirin, Ibuprofen, etc. should not be taken for two weeks before or after surgery Tylenol is fine. It is not unusual for patients who have had a tonsillectomy to have pain in their ears. This is not cause for alarm; it is usually secondary to throat pain, which is often felt in the ears.

### **Fever**

Mild temperature elevation (< 101°F) is not unusual in the first few days following the surgery. Unless the patient has other symptoms, a slight fever is of little concern and typically subsides.

### **Activity**

Avoid heavy lifting, straining or any activity, which will raise the pressure in your head. Walking is acceptable, as are car trips and routine household chores, as long as they do not require lifting or straining. School age children should be out of school for about one week. After returning to school, a child should not attend gym or recess during the second post-surgery week. Swimming is not allowed for the first two weeks.

### **Diet**

The most important dietary consideration after the surgery is getting enough liquids. Soft solids such as yogurt, ice cream or mashed potatoes are fine. Only particularly hard foods, such as pretzels and potato chips, should be avoided for the full two-week period.

### **Oral Examination**

After the surgery, you will notice white patches on the side walls of the throat. This is simply the normal healing response in the oral cavity. It does not indicate an infection and is not a cause for alarm.

### **Sleeping**

A humidifier at the bedside keeps the throat from drying and tends to decrease discomfort, particularly in the winter months.

### **Bleeding**

If post-operative bleeding occurs, the patient should be reassured and encouraged to sit up and lean forward to allow most of the blood to come out of the mouth. Ice cubes may be pressed under the angles of the jaw to slow or stop the bleeding. The doctor's office should be notified (383-6800), and the patient immediately taken to the emergency room at the institution where the operation was performed. Post-operative bleeding is most likely to occur seven to ten days after surgery.

### **Antibiotics**

We often use antibiotics during the post-operative period to control secondary bacterial infection. If antibiotics are prescribed, they should be taken for the entire time prescribed.