



# Tonsillectomy

## Post-Op Instructions



**PAIN:** You can expect pain after a tonsillectomy. Pain medication will make the pain more tolerable, but it may not eliminate it. Children under five do well with alternating liquid Tylenol every three hours, with liquid ibuprofen every three hours. The dosing should be based on weight. Persons over five will be given a prescription of liquid pain medication. An ice collar around the throat can sometimes be helpful. You may experience referred pain to the neck, jaw and ears, this is common, and the pain medication should help.



**PAIN CONTROL:** You should take pain medication regularly for the first few days. Prescription pain medication has Tylenol in it, so do not take Tylenol with it. Once pain starts to subside, spread out how often you are taking the pain medication and eventually transition to over-the-counter Tylenol or ibuprofen. Common side effects of prescription pain medication are nausea and constipation. It is important to take it with food. If you experience constipation, you can try Miralax daily for three days.



**FEVER:** You may experience increased temperatures. This is usually a sign of dehydration. Rehydrate as much as possible. If you are lethargic and not urinating adequately, this may require IV fluids.



**DIET:** Soft foods are recommended after a tonsillectomy. Things to avoid are spicy, acidic, crunchy or hard foods. Sometimes you may not feel like eating, however, you **MUST** stay hydrated! Drink plenty of water or Gatorade/Powerade. Dairy may thicken secretions and make it more difficult to swallow.



**ACTIVITY:** No strenuous activity, heavy lifting, or bending over for two weeks because of the risk of bleeding. It is important to be up and out of bed throughout the day.



**TONSILLECTOMY SITE:** There will be a wet scab in the back of the throat. This may take on a gray or yellow-green appearance. The scab can also give you bad breath. It is not infected. The wet scab will usually fall off in five to ten days. When it falls off, you may notice some bleeding. If this occurs, sip icy-cold water, it will usually stop on its own. If it doesn't after five to ten minutes, you should be seen in the ER, it may need to be cauterized. If an adenoidectomy was also done, you may see spotting from the nose. Wipe as needed; this is an expected finding.



**RETURNING TO WORK OR SCHOOL:** Typically, when prescription pain medication is no longer needed, you may return to work or school. If a doctor's note is required, please call our office to have one faxed.



**FOLLOW-UP:** Our nurses will call you two to four weeks post-op for your follow-up. There is no need to be seen unless you have complications.

### WE ARE HERE FOR YOU

Please don't hesitate to contact our office at **605-217-4320**, if you have any questions or concerns. We are happy to assist you.

If you are unsure of an emergency and it is outside of business hours, please call the operator at Unity Point at **712-279-3500** and ask for the ENT on-call.