



## **Tonsillectomy and Adenoidectomy (T & A Surgery) Postoperative Instructions**

### **What To Expect After Surgery**

#### **1.) Bleeding**

A. Bleeding is rare after surgery. However, there maybe a few little spots of blood from the mouth or nose for the first day after surgery.

B. Bleeding may also occur 5-10 days after surgery. This is the time when crusts fall off the healing areas.

C. If there is more than minor spotting or if there is bleeding at any other time, call the Loyola University Medical Center at (708) 216-8000 and ask to speak with the Ear, Nose, and Throat (ENT) physician on call. The doctor may wish to see you/your child in the Emergency Room. Usually, the bleeding can be controlled there. Very rarely is you/your child hospitalized to control the bleeding.

#### **2.) Pain**

A. The amount of pain after surgery varies. A tonsillectomy is usually more painful than an adenoidectomy. The doctor wants you/your child to be as comfortable as possible. The following information will give you /your child the best pain relief.

##### **1.) After Adenoid Surgery:**

- a) Give plain Tylenol every 4 hours while awake for the first day or two.
- b) A prescription for Tylenol with Codeine Elixir will be given to you in case pain is serve.
- c) If you/your child is doing well after the second day, the pain medication can be stopped.

##### **2) After Tonsil Surgery:**

a) A prescription for Tylenol with Codeine Elixir (liquid) will be given. It will help you/your child significantly if the pain is not controlled by plain Tylenol. The dose carefully calculated so you/your child will not receive too much medicine.

b) If you/your child are in pain, give both:

\* Plain Tylenol every 4 hours while awake and

\* Tylenol with Codeine Elixir (prescription) every 4 hours while awake

c) Give the plain Tylenol, not Tylenol with Codeine, every 4 hours even if you/your child is not having pain. This offers the best continuous pain relief.

d) Plain Tylenol

Give \*\*\* cc (\*\*\*)mg) every 4 hours by month when you/your child is awake for at least one week.

e) Tylenol with Codeine Elixir (prescription):

Give \*\*\* cc (\*\*\*)mg) every 4 hours while awake.

f) When to Give Medicine:

You have 2 choices:

1. You can give both medicines at the same time.

Example:

12:00 p.m. Give pain Tylenol and Tylenol with Codeine  
4:00 p.m. Give pain Tylenol and Tylenol with Codeine  
8:00 p.m. Give pain Tylenol and Tylenol with Codeine

2. You can give Tylenol with Codeine between doses of the plain Tylenol.

Example:

12:00 p.m. Give plain Tylenol  
2:00 p.m. Give Tylenol with Codeine  
4:00 p.m. Give plain Tylenol  
6:00 p.m. Give Tylenol with Codeine

g) DO NOT GIVEN ASPIRIN. ASPIRIN CAN CAUSE BLEEDING.

### 3.) Ear Pain

- A. Ear pain can occur after tonsil surgery. It can be on one side or both sides. This pain is not abnormal. It is referred pain from the tonsil area. The pain medicine being taken will help this problem.
- B. You/your child may find a heating pad (set on low) to the ear helpful in discomfort.

### 4.) Head and Neck Pain

- A. During surgery, the mouth was propped wide open. This may cause discomfort after surgery. You/your child may have pain in the back of the neck, back of the head, or at the jaw point.
- B. The pain medication will also help the discomfort to the painful area. A heating pad (low setting) may be extra soothing to you/your child. Do not give or take any extra pain medication.

### 5.) Fever

- A. You/your child may have low-grade fever after surgery. Use a thermometer to check the temperature.
- B. The plain Tylenol given for pain will also help reduce the fever.
- C. Call the doctor if the fever is higher than 100 degrees F, 37.8 degrees C - axillary  
101 degrees F, 38.4 degrees C - orally  
102 degrees F, 38.4 degrees C - rectal

### 6.) Nausea and Vomiting

- A. You/your child may have nausea after surgery. Vomiting may occur. This is usually due to anesthesia. The staff will give you an emesis basin to take home in case you/your child becomes nauseous and vomits in the car.
- B. A small amount of blood may be seen in the vomited material. This blood was probably swallowed during surgery. You do not need to be worried about this.
- C. Call the doctor if you/your child continues to vomit or if a large amount of blood is vomited.

## **7.) Diet**

A. Fluids are very important after surgery to prevent dehydration. If you/your child becomes dehydrated, the pain will be worse. On a rare occasion, you/your child may become dehydrated and need to be seen in the emergency room for intravenous fluids.

B. Giving the pain medicine every 4 hours will make the throat less sore. This will make it easier to drink the liquids.

C. Start with sips of clear liquids such as apple juice, flat soda pop, clear broth, jello, and water.

D. Slowly increase the amount of liquid. Too much liquid given too quickly may cause nausea and vomiting.

E. Whenever liquids are tolerated, you/your child may start eating solid foods.

F. After surgery, you/your child's throat will be sore. It may be hard for him/her to drink:

\* Bubbly, carbonated beverages

\* Acidic juices such as orange, grapefruit, or tomato

## **8.) Cough and Bad Breath**

A.) You/your child may have bad breath after tonsil and adenoid surgery. This is normal. The raw area where the tonsils and adenoids were removed becomes somewhat infected. This causes the bad breath. As the area heals, the odor will go away. Do not have you/your child gargle during this time.

B. The raw area may produce extra secretions. These can cause you/your child to cough and gag. Additionally, you/your child may seem to be more stuffy and congested after surgery.

## **9.) Activity**

A. Children naturally restrict their activity when they do not feel well. When your child is ready to play, most activity for one week follows the surgery. Rest is an important part of the recovery process.

B. Adults should restrict activity for one week following the surgery. Rest is an important part of the recovery process.

### **CALL THE DOCTOR IMMEDIATELY IF ANY OF THE FOLLOWING OCCUR:**

1. Bleeding which is more than a few little spots.
2. Pain which is not controlled.
3. Vomiting which continues.
4. Large amounts of vomited blood.
5. You/your child will not drink fluids.
6. You/your child does not urinate.
7. Fever higher than 101 degrees F.

If you have any questions or concern, or if you/your child should experience difficulty breathing, bleeding that you feel is excessive, persistent nausea or vomiting, pain that is unusual, swelling, or fever, please call your doctor at (708) \*\*\* Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. After 5:00 p.m. or on the weekend, call the Loyola University Physicians' Answering Service (24 hours) at (708) 216-8000 and ask to speak with the ENT resident physician on call, or call the Loyola University Medical Center Emergency Department at (708) 216-3882, or go to an emergency room which is closest to you.

Patient verbalizes understanding of the above instructions.