

Home Care After Tonsillectomy - Adult



Tonsillectomy is a safe and effective surgical procedure that will provide you with lasting benefits. The suggestions below should help with a rapid recovery.

Diet:

Drink at least 4 to 6 eight-ounce glasses of liquid daily (Gatorade, fruit punch and non citrus juices) to prevent dehydration. Within 1-2 days, add cold and soothing foods (ices, ice-cream, frozen yogurt, Jell-O). As you feel better, add soft bland items that are easy to chew and swallow (pasta, puddings, mashed potatoes, tuna or chicken salad, macaroni and cheese). Avoid foods that are sharp, hot, or spicy. Lollipops and hard candies may be sucked, not chewed.

Activity:

There are no strict rules for activity after surgery other than to avoid contact sports or heavy exertion for about 2 weeks. Work can be resumed after one week for nearly all patients. You should get out of bed frequently and return to normal activity as soon as possible.

Pain:

There's no doubt about it: tonsillectomy does not top the list of ways to have fun. You may be in severe pain. You can, however, minimize your discomfort by:

- adequate food and liquid intake
- making sure to take all of the prescribed antibiotic
- chewing your favorite gum (it exercises the jaw muscles and lubricates the throat with saliva)

Acetaminophen (Tylenol) can be used liberally, but ibuprofen products (Motrin, Advil) should be avoided because they can increase the chance of bleeding.

Some Things Not to Worry About:

A *hoarse* or *abnormal voice* may occur for several days from the anesthesia tube and from a temporary stiffness of the palate. *Vomiting* may occur for up to 24 hours. *Snoring* may persist for 1-2 weeks because of temporary swelling around the tonsils. *Ear pain* may occur (the ears and tonsils share common nerves), but is temporary and requires no treatment. Fever up to 101 degrees, and *bad breath* are common for several days. A *scab* or *crust* will form in the throat and will absorb gradually within about 2 weeks.

When to Call the Doctor:

- there is persistent or excessive bleeding (go right to the nearest emergency room if severe)
- you have inadequate food or beverage intake
- fever is 102 degrees or higher *despite* acetaminophen (Tylenol)
- you develop a severe stiff neck
- foul breath is persisting (without signs of improvement) after 3-4 days
- you seem to be getting worse-not better as the days go by.

For Questions or Emergency Care:

Call the office at **601-984-5160**. You may need to speak with the doctor on-call.