

TONSILLECTOMY POST-OPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS:

During recovery, nearly everyone experiences pain after a tonsillectomy. Pain is often experienced in the throat and frequently in the ears, but may also be located in the neck or the jaw. Steps that you can take to reduce pain, promote recovery, and prevent complications include the following:

- **Medications:** Take pain medications as directed by your surgeon or the surgical staff.
- **Fluids:** It's important to get plenty of fluids after surgery to avoid dehydration. Water and ice pops are good choices.
- **Food:** Bland foods that are easy to swallow, such as applesauce or broth, are the best choices immediately after surgery. Foods such as ice cream and pudding can be added to the diet if they're tolerable. Foods that are easy to chew and swallow should be added to the diet as soon as possible. Avoid acidic, spicy, hard, or crunchy foods as they may agitate the site and cause pain or bleeding.
- **Rest:** Bed rest is important for several days after surgery. Strenuous activities, such as running and bike riding, should be avoided for at least two weeks following surgery. You or your child should be able to return to work or school after resuming a normal diet, normal sleep pattern, and pain medication is no longer needed. Talk to your doctor if you have any questions about any activities that should be avoided.

Watch for the following complications that require prompt medical care:

- **Bleeding during healing:** Bleeding can occur during the healing process, particularly if the scab from the wound gets dislodged too soon. Initially, you may see small specks of dark blood from your nose or saliva, but any start of constant flow of bright red blood requires a trip to the emergency room for prompt evaluation and treatment. Surgery to stop bleeding may be necessary.
- **Breathing problems:** Snoring or noisy breathing is common during the first week or so of recovery. However, if you or your child are having difficulty breathing, seek emergency care.
- **Dehydration:** Call your doctor if you observe signs of dehydration: reduced urination, thirst, weakness, headache, dizziness, or lightheadedness. Common signs of dehydration in children include urinating fewer than two or three times a day or crying with no tears.
- **Please contact the office any time for the following problems:**
 - Uncontrolled bleeding or pain.
 - Numbness from the local anesthetic lasting longer than 6 hours after surgery.
 - Elevated temperature (>100.5 F).
 - Swelling that begins or increases several days after surgery. (It starts to get better but then gets worse!).
 - Inability to open mouth persisting beyond 7 days.
 - Persistent irritation at the IV site.
 - Any adverse reaction to taking your prescribed medications.
 - A bad taste in your mouth that started several days following surgery.

We are available and happy to answer any questions that you may have during regular business hours, but if you have an emergent question after business hours, we do have an after-hours call service that will direct you with the on-call doctor. This is simply our office phone number (907) 222-5052. If you feel that you are having a life-threatening emergency, please call 911 immediately for assistance.