

TE★AS  
EAR, NOSE & THROAT  
SPECIALISTS, L.L.P.

Charles H. Railsback, M.D.

John C. Ponder, M.D.

James D. Gonzales, M.D.

Peter T. Janicki, M.D.

Natalie A. Roberge, M.D.

Courtney A .Noell, M.D.

817-540-3121

## Postoperative instructions: Tonsillectomy

- **Dehydration:** you will not get malnourished if you do not eat a well-balanced diet for a few days after your surgery, but you can get dehydrated in as few as 48 hours. It is important to drink plenty of fluids, even if it hurts to swallow. You should take the pain medicines as prescribed, wait 30 to 45 minute for it to reach peak effect, and then try to drink. Anything you want to drink is fine. Plain tap water is acceptable as is Gatorade, juices and popsicles. Most anything that goes down is okay. Milk and milk products thicken mucus and may make swallowing more difficult. If you feel like eating solid foods, that is permissible, but you should avoid scratchy foods such as dry toast and potato chips. Anything else is fine. If you are urinating every few hours and the urine is not excessively dark or strong smelling, you are drinking enough. If you are not drinking enough, you will need fluids intravenously and that means a new IV. PARENTS- this can be an effective threat to get children drinking again.
- As a rough guideline:
  - 40 to 60 pounds      drink approximately 30 ounces a day
  - 61 to 100 pounds      drink approximately 40 ounces a day
  - over 100 pounds      drink approximately 50 ounces a day
- **Bleeding:** you will form a yellow-whitish-gray soft scab-like material over tonsils area which comes off in 5 to 7 days. This is not an infection. It is part of the normal healing process. You may also notice an objectionable odor from the mouth. When the scab comes off, you may notice some blood in your saliva. Generally, gargling with cold water will stop the bleeding. If this continues, you will need to contact the office.

- **Pain:** although patients recover from surgery differently, you should expect to be sore for about a week after a tonsillectomy. Older children and adults require a longer recovery time. Ear pain is common after a tonsillectomy. This is not an ear infection but “referred pain” coming from the tonsils, but felt in the ears. Drinking fluids will help decrease the pain as it keeps the throat moist and helps keep the throat muscles from going into spasm. School, play and work activity should be curtailed for 7 to 10 days. P.E. and sports are to be avoided for two weeks after surgery.
- **Nausea and vomiting:** this is common after general anesthesia, especially after a tonsillectomy. If you have nausea at home, take the anti-nausea medicine if it was prescribed. If it was not, please call. Initially, stop all foods and liquids, then an hour or so after taking the nausea medicine, begin drinking plain water or flat soda.

Generally, we will see you back in the office for a postoperative check about two weeks after surgery. If you have any problems or questions before that, be sure to call. Our phones are answered 24 hours a day.