

## **TONSILLECTOMY** **Postoperative Instructions**

**Activity** *Any reasonable activity is fine* at any time following your surgery, but avoid strenuous activity involving a high heart rate and lots of sweating for two weeks. This is to minimize the risk of bleeding. For kids, no participation in school P.E. for 2 weeks.

**Food** *There are no specific dietary restrictions after surgery.* In other words, patients can eat anything they desire, but in general cool liquids are best tolerated initially. Recommended foods initially include water, soft drinks (carbonation is O.K.), Popsicles, ice cream, Jell-O, frozen yogurt, broth, and apple juice. There are even some patients that say they prefer warm or room temperature foods. Patients do not need to eat a great deal of solid food, but a normal amount of liquid intake is important to avoid dehydration.

**Pain** Pain after tonsillectomy is common, not only in the throat but also in the ears due to a nerve reflex. Your pain medication will help, and will likely be required regularly for about 10 days after surgery. Pain medicine cannot be expected to *completely eliminate* pain. Some patients have little pain and some seem to have a great deal; it really varies. The significant pain is over within 7-10 days but minor pain can persist for even 3 weeks, especially with yawning, belching or first thing in the morning. Do not take aspirin, ibuprofen, or other anti-inflammatory medications for one-week prior and two weeks after surgery, as these medications thin blood and increase the risk of bleeding.

**Bleeding** It is not unusual to see a small amount of blood streaking in mucus at some point during the first two weeks after surgery. Occasionally some bright red blood (a few teaspoons) can be seen around approximately the 6 to 10 day point as the throat heals. Most bleeding episodes, while alarming to see, will stop spontaneously in a few seconds or minutes. Notify your doctor immediately if significant amounts of persistent bright red bleeding occur. Do not wait until the next day to call. *The patient should gargle with ice water while the doctor is being notified.* If for any reason there is difficulty contacting the doctor, go to the emergency room. For pediatric patients who require true emergency care, you will need to go to the Children's Medical Center of Dallas emergency room. Please familiarize yourself with how to get to the Children's emergency room just in case. The address is 1935 Medical District Dr (also known as Motor Street), Dallas, TX 75235. The Children's Hospital emergency department phone number is (214) 456-7000.

**Other information** Fever to even 101 degrees in the day or two following tonsillectomy is not unusual. Ten deep breaths per hour will frequently resolve these fevers. Bad breath is sometimes encountered for 8-10 days following tonsillectomy and is due to mouth bacteria in a healing membrane over the operative site.

### **For questions or problems**

Call Ear, Nose & Throat Specialty Care at (214) 826-ENT1. After hours call (214) 346-1359.