

POST-OP INSTRUCTIONS – Tonsillectomy and Adenoidectomy

DIET

- During the operation and often afterwards your child will have fluid running directly into their veins keeping them hydrated. This will continue until your child is drinking sufficiently and there is no vomiting. When your child is fully awake they can start eating and drinking. We encourage all children to eat a normal diet but often they prefer softer foods. It is OK if your child does not want to eat any solid food as long as you keep up their fluids.
- Fluids include water, juices, rehydration fluids like Hydralyte, Sports drinks like Powerade or Gatorade AS WELL AS jelly, milkshakes, yoghurt, custard, soups, ice-cream etc
- Spoil them, they deserve it, have a number of options like chocolate milk, soft-serve ice cream, jelly etc and offer them a small amount of each every 5 minutes.
- REMEMBER it is better to have small sips (10-15mls) every few minutes than to try and force down large amounts.
- Hydralyte ice lollies are usually well tolerated and assist in maintaining hydration.

PAIN

- Varies significantly from person to person BUT Tonsillectomy *is* a painful procedure
- The pain is often referred to your ears (blocked, pressure or painful) or your teeth
- The pain usually improves after 2-4 days but often flares again around 7-10 days
- Keeping up your fluid intake and taking antibiotics reduces the flare up
- Pain is best managed by REGULAR painkillers – do not wait for the pain to build up!
- If you let mild pain build up it will become severe and difficult to manage
 - Give your child Panadol every 6 hours for the first 2-4 days
 - I also recommend anti-inflammatory medication such as Nurofen or Ibuprofen.
 - Alternating panadol and nurofen allows regular doses of safe medication.
 - Recent research suggests that they do NOT increase the risk of bleeding
 - For severe pain you can use Oxycodone syrup.
- Recent studies have shown there is benefit from honey – give then a teaspoon (5mls) when they wake – obviously giving enen more is harmless and may be helpful.
- Acupressure point P6 (two fingers from the wrist between the tendons) can reduce nausea

ACTIVITY

- It is recommended that your child rest for 7 – 10 days after a tonsillectomy and start gentle activity in the second week. Your child should be off school for this period of time and avoid any vigorous activity.

HYGIENE

- Your child should continue brushing their teeth morning and night and have regular baths / showers.

RECOVERY

- Your child may experience ear pain, swallowing difficulty and even toothache. This is usually due to referred pain along shared nerve supply – take regular painkillers
- You may notice they have a very bad breath even with regular tooth brushing - this is from the adenoid slough (white / yellow / green covering over the site of the operation) – this is normal
- There will be a yellow – green film over the tonsil bed which is often mistaken for infection – keep your child drinking and taking their antibiotics – this is part of the healing process. If their temperature >38.5 degrees Celsius contact Dr Kalish's rooms or your Local Doctor

- Often your child will be on their way to recovery only to have a slight relapse around day 7. This is usually due to the scabs coming away. Remember fluids and painkillers and take it easy.
- Your Child may snore even worse than before the surgery in the first few days due to swelling, do not worry this will improve over the first week
- Your child's voice may sound high pitched (hypernasal), this will settle but in a few cases can take weeks or months. This is caused by the palate not making a good seal with the back of the pharynx, if you are worried ask Dr Kalish about simple speech therapy exercises to help it improve quicker.

BLEEDING

- This is the biggest concern after surgery.
- 5% of patients will have some bleeding (small amounts of fresh blood or old clot) BUT 2% of patients can have a larger bleed and may need to have an operation to stop the bleeding. If there is more than one tablespoon of fresh blood report **immediately to the nearest emergency department that deals with children. Call an ambulance if concerned.**

ANTIBIOTICS

- I do not routinely give antibiotics after tonsillectomy.
- I do recommend the use of probiotics – encourage your child to eat yoghurts or consider supplements like Inner Health Plus, Tummy Health or little squirts probiotics.

FOLLOW UP

- Follow up arrangement will be made at the time of your discharge
- It is usually 4-6 weeks after the surgery in the rooms.
- Please ring the rooms to book the post operative appointment 9362 5991

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to help improve your child's current condition. Surgery often represents one of the most effective ways we can intervene and assist in managing their problem. Unfortunately it is also the most invasive and often requires a significant recuperation time. It is always important to remember why they are having the surgery and what are the long-term benefits.

Every person responds differently to surgery and every outcome will differ slightly as well.

If you have ANY concerns please contact us through our rooms on 02 9362 5991. If it is an emergency please contact Concord Hospital on 02 9767 5000 and ask to be put through to Dr Kalish. If I am not available you can speak to the ENT Registrar who will assist you with any emergencies and contact me as soon as possible.