



Dr Talmadge – Adult Tonsillectomy After Care
Office # 402-397-0670

Pain

Pain is often worse at night and in the mornings. Pain usually peaks around 6-8 days after surgery. Ear pain is also common (this is nerve pain from the tonsil region and is NOT from an ear infection). An ice pack or bag of frozen vegetables can be placed on the neck for 15-20 minutes per hour. Alternate the following every 3-4 hours while awake:

- Plain Tylenol (acetaminophen) 500-650 mg every 6 hours as needed
OR 1-2 tablets of hydrocodone/acetaminophen 5/325 every 6 hours as needed
- Motrin (ibuprofen) 400-600 mg every 6-8 hours as needed

Hydration

It is very important that you drink plenty of fluids to prevent dehydration. Signs of dehydration include fever and dark urine. Ideas include water, Gatorade, Pedialyte, apple juice, popsicles, slushies, and milkshakes. Avoid citrus such as orange juice which may sting/burn. You may use straws but avoid thick drinks like milkshakes through straws.

Eating

Most people don't feel like eating for the first few days. Some patients experience weight loss after tonsillectomy. As your appetite improves, let your taste guide what you eat. Most foods are fine except those that can burn (spicy or citrus) or scratch (chips, toast, pretzels).

Activity

No vigorous physical activity (gym, swimming, or running) for 14 days after surgery.

Fever

Fever of 100-101 is quite common in the initial few days after surgery. Increasing hydration can help.

Uvula Swelling

The uvula may get very swollen. This is a normal reaction to the surgery and subsides in several weeks. In some cases, steroids such as prednisone can be sent in to help reduce swelling.

Bad Breath

This is common and can be severe. This may last up to 7-10 days.

Tongue Numbness/Taste Change

It is not unusual to have mild tongue swelling and/or the sides and tip of the tongue to feel numb or a temporary change in taste for a couple weeks.

Bleeding

Around 6-10 days after surgery, the tonsillectomy gray/white scabs come off. Some bloody mucus may result and should stop within 15-20 minutes. Swishing the mouth out with cold ice water may help stop the bleeding (rinse and spit over and over).

If you are spitting or vomiting up continuous bright red blood, call our office to notify the ENT physician on call and go to your nearest Emergency Room (i.e. Methodist Main Hospital at 8303 Dodge St, Omaha, NE 68114 where our ENT group covers emergencies). Postoperative bleeding may require a return to the operating room for control.