

## **Tonsillectomy and Adenoidectomy (T and A) Removal of Tonsils and Adenoids Surgery**

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### **What is a T and A?**

A **Tonsillectomy** is the removal of tonsils from the sides of your throat. An **Adenoidectomy** is the removal of adenoids. Adenoids are tonsillar tissue at the back of the nose where you cannot see them.

You may have a tonsillectomy or an adenoidectomy or both. This will depend on what your problem is. Talk to your surgeon about what surgery you are having.

You will have a general anesthetic for this operation. A general anesthetic means you will be put to sleep during the surgery. The operation is done through your mouth.

### **Before Surgery**

For 2 weeks before surgery, do not use aspirin products such as Aspirin, Ibuprofen (Advil, Motrin), 222s, ASA or Toradol. Check the labels first or ask your pharmacist for advice.

### **After Surgery**

After surgery, you go to the recovery room until you are awake and doing well. You are then taken to a Surgery Unit where you are watched for a few more hours.

About 6 to 8 hours after surgery you may go home. Some people need to stay in the hospital for one night. What happens depends on:

- if you have bleeding or not
- if you are drinking well or not
- if you have any complications or not
- if you need any special care or not

In the Surgery Unit you are assessed on how you are doing based on these things before you go home:

- the amount of pain you have
- the amount of fluid you are drinking
- the condition of your throat
- if you have nausea or vomiting
- how close you live to emergency help
- how much help you have at home

**When you go home the same day as surgery, follow these guidelines:**

**Rest**

Rest to help yourself heal. Rest as much as you can for 7 to 10 days. You may go back to work or school in 1 to 2 weeks. Check with your surgeon first.

**Avoid irritating your throat**

- Try not to cough or clear your throat.
- Do not gargle with water or mouthwash for 24 hours. Check with your surgeon **before using** any mouthwash other than water or salt water.
- Do not brush your teeth for 8 to 10 hours.
- Continue to drink fluids from a cup or glass.
- Do not use a straw.
- Do not smoke.
- Rest your voice.
- Do not scream or raise your voice.

**Relieve nausea and vomiting**

You may need a medication such as Gravol, given by suppository, to help control nausea and vomiting.

## **Relieve pain or discomfort**

Pain or discomfort may last up to 2 weeks after surgery. Take medication for pain as directed by your doctor, usually every 3 to 4 hours. Do not take Aspirin or medications containing ASA as these may cause bleeding. You can take ibuprofen (Advil, Motrin) if you need a boost for pain medication. If you are not sure about medication, ask your doctor, nurse or pharmacist.

If you vomit the medication within 20 minutes, you may take it again, one time only. If you vomit again, contact your doctor. Put a cold pack or ice collar around your throat. Remember not to put the cold pack directly onto your skin. Wrap it in a thin towel first.

It is common to have pain in the ears, often 5 to 7 days, after surgery. This can continue until your throat heals.

You may get constipated if you take a prescription pain control medication such as Tylenol with Codeine. You may want to use a laxative every day starting the day after surgery as long as you are taking a prescription pain control medication. Talk to your pharmacist for advice.

## **Drinking and eating**

Drink small amounts of fluid every hour until you go to bed the first day home. Drink only clear, cool fluids for 12 to 24 hours. This includes water, juice, gingerale, 7-Up™, popsicles, freezies, Jello™.

The day after your operation, you can slowly increase your diet with soft foods over the next 7 to 10 days. This includes yogurt, ice cream, pudding, soft boiled eggs, mashed potatoes, mashed vegetables, cooked pasta and soft bread as you can manage them. You should continue to drink fluids by a cup or glass. ✘ **Do not use a straw.**

**Remember . . . ✘ Do not have very hot liquids for the first 2 days.  
Hot liquids can cause bleeding.**

## **The first night at home**

Have someone sleep close to you the first night or use a call bell. This person should wake you up one time during the night to give you pain medication and a drink. This person should also check for signs of bleeding:

- swallowing often
- spitting or vomiting bright red blood
- having a nose bleed
- looking pale
- feeling restless or disturbed

## **After the first 24 hours at home**

Rest and stay quiet from work or school about 1 to 2 weeks. Stay away from crowds to 10 days and avoid contact with people who have infections. Wash your hands often and well to prevent picking up an infection. Continue to check for signs of bleeding during this time.

## **Checking your throat**

When you or your helper are looking in your throat, you will see a soft piece of skin in the middle of your throat called the uvula. The uvula may be swollen and this is normal. The swelling will go down in a few days.

You may see grey film or scabs where your tonsils were on either side of your throat. This is normal. Do not touch this area.

## **Looking after your mouth and throat**

You can brush your teeth after the first night. You may have bad smelling breath as you heal. Avoid mouthwash for 1 week. You may gargle gently with a solution made of 1 teaspoon of baking soda mixed with 250 ml (1 cup) of water.

## **Contact your doctor if:**

- you have not voided after 12 hours at home
- you have continued vomiting
- you have a fever

## **Go to the nearest Emergency Department right away if you have:**

- increased bleeding from your nose or throat