



Department of Otolaryngology

www.connecticutchildrens.org

860.545.9650

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FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS TONSILLECTOMY AND ADENOIDECTOMY

There is blood coming from my child's mouth. What should I do?

Bleeding can occur anytime from the day of the procedure to 2-3 weeks afterward; it is most common 1-2 weeks after the procedure. Small specks of blood from the nose or in the saliva are normal.

Seeing bright red blood is not normal. If this type of bleeding occurs, call our office immediately at **860.545.9650**. If there is a lot of bleeding, your child needs to be evaluated by the nearest emergency department. Bleeding can be a serious problem.

My child has a fever. What should I do?

A fever up to 101.5°F is normal for several days following surgery. If your child's temperature is above 101.5°F or lasts for more than two days, call our office at **860.545.9650**. Remember that your child's prescription pain medication already has Tylenol in it so if you are using this medication, do not give additional Tylenol.

My child refuses to take the prescription pain medicine. What should I do?

Many children do not like the taste of the prescription pain medicine, so they refuse to take it. Measure out the dose of medicine and try mixing it with a small amount of something very sweet like chocolate,

strawberry or peach syrup, or grape juice concentrate. Be sure to only add a small amount of the syrup because your child will need to take the entire amount of mixture to get all of the pain medication needed for relief. Praise or reward your child for taking the medication. Eventually, your child can stop the prescription pain medication and take over-the-counter Tylenol with good effect.

My child is complaining of nausea. What should I do?

This is very common and usually occurs during the first 24 hours following anesthesia. After the first 24 hours, the nausea may be related to the prescription pain medication.

My child is vomiting. What should I do?

If your child is vomiting, stop giving any liquids/food for one hour. Then, start slowly with clear liquids. Gradually increase the serving by a few ounces each hour. If vomiting occurs again, stop for an hour and restart the process. If vomiting persists, call our office at **860.545.9650**.

My child is sleeping all the time. What should I do?

Children are often sleepy immediately following surgery due to effects of anesthesia. Your child does need some rest to heal. Wake your child every few hours during

the day and have them drink several ounces of a variety of fluids (not water) containing calories, to provide adequate hydration. Be sure your child is getting the correct amount of pain medication at the frequency ordered by the doctor.

My child does not want to drink. What should I do?

Many children refuse to drink because of pain. Give the prescribed pain medication as ordered and try to give fluids about a half hour later. Parents need to be very firm that children must drink. Help your child feel more in control by offering a choice between two fluids. Gatorade, apple juice or ginger ale are all good choices (water has no calories and may not make your child feel better).

Straws, sippy cups and bottles may be used after surgery. Have your child drink 2-3 ounces at the top and bottom of every hour. You may also offer ice pops, Jello, milk or milkshakes. If your child does not drink they will become dehydrated which could require hospitalization. Signs of dehydration include: urination less once a day, no tears when crying, dry chapped lips, dark amber colored urine. If your child refuses to drink, please call our office at **860.545.9650**.

My child does not want to eat. What should I do?

In the first day or so, your child may not want to eat solid food. Insist on fluid intake as described above. As tolerated, advance to a diet that includes soft foods like mashed potatoes (gravy and butter to increase calories will help with healing), overcooked (mushy) macaroni and cheese, scrambled eggs, applesauce, oatmeal (maple syrup adds calories), pudding, yogurt, and baby foods. Offer foods in frequent small portions to avoid overwhelming your child.

Are there any foods that my child should avoid eating?

Avoid spicy foods, heated foods and dry foods with sharp edges such as chips or toast.

My child is complaining of ear pain. What should I do?

Because some of the nerves that go to the tonsils and the adenoids also go to the ear, your child may complain of ear pain after surgery, either with the throat pain or after experiencing the throat pain. Pain medication may not work as well for this type of ear discomfort, so placing either a warm or cool compress on the ear may give relief. Also, gentle massage of the face between the ear and the cheek may give relief.

What restrictions will my child have after surgery?

Encourage quiet activity for your child for one week following surgery. Your child should not participate in gym class, recess, chorus, sports, or play woodwind or brass musical instruments for two full weeks after surgery. This information is included in the note to return to school from Connecticut Children's Medical Center.

My child is being very active. What should I do?

As stated above, it is very important to encourage quiet activity for your child. Rest is needed to heal. Also, increased activity may increase the risk of bleeding.

When can my child return to school or daycare?

Your child should stay home from school for at least one week after the surgery. In order for your child to return to school, the prescription pain medication should no longer be needed during the day. Some children need more time to recover and are home for 10-14 days. Present the note from Connecticut Children's Medical Center when your child returns to school after surgery.

When I look in my child's mouth I see white where the tonsils were removed. Is that normal?

A scab will form where the tonsils and adenoids were removed. These scabs are white and fall off about a week after surgery. Go to the nearest emergency department if there is bleeding.

My child has very bad breath. What should I do?

The white scabs in the throat that form where the tonsils and adenoids were removed cause bad breath for 7-14 days. Do not use mouthwash, as this will cause discomfort and not relieve odor. The problem will resolve on its own over time.

My child is snoring and breathing through his/her mouth. What should I do?

Surgery causes swelling in the throat that sometimes leads to mouth-breathing and snoring. As the swelling decreases, breathing should improve within 10-14 days.

My child has not had a bowel movement since the surgery. What should I do?

Your child's normal bowel movement pattern may change after surgery for a number of reasons. First, your child's food intake has probably significantly decreased after the surgery. Secondly, the prescription pain medication can cause constipation. Lastly, not drinking enough fluid contributes to the problem. To ease this condition:

- Make sure your child is drinking plenty of fluids
- Offer pear nectar, apricot nectar or prune juice
- Limit intake of yogurt, bananas and applesauce
- Offer strained baby fruits such as apricots, peaches, pears or prunes

Call our office at **860.545.9650** if the problem persists.

My child's voice sounds different. What should I do?

This can happen after surgery, but should resolve in approximately 3-4 weeks.

When I look in my child's mouth I see white on his/her tongue. What is causing that to happen?

During surgery, special instruments are used to hold the tongue out of the way and this can cause the tongue to appear white for a few days after surgery.

My child wants to blow his/her nose. Is that safe?

Your child may blow his/her nose gently, but may not feel relief. The feeling of congestion is related to swelling, which will decrease over time.