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HOME CARE AFTER TONSILLECTOMY

- ACTIVITIES:** Bed rest and quiet activities are advised. No running, lifting, yelling, driving, swimming, school, or work for the first two weeks. Slowly return to regular activities during the third week.
- DIET:** Diet suggestions throughout the 2-week recovery period include water, tea, apple juice, Gatorade, milk, milkshakes, popsicles, Jell-O, ice cream, mashed potatoes, pancakes, scrambled eggs, applesauce, grits, noodles, pasta, macaroni and cheese, dumplings, soft chicken, and meatloaf. No particular schedule for progression through the food types is necessary. All intakes should be liquid, semi-solid, soft, bland, and cool foods. Sodas are permissible but not preferred. Straws are OK. Emphasis should be placed on hydration rather than nutrition. Fluids must be strongly encouraged to prevent dehydration. Weight loss is expected.
- MEDICATION:** Throat pain is initially controlled but becomes more severe on days 3-4 and peaks during days 7-10. Days 10-14 are usually when recovery is expected. Referred ear and jaw pain is common. For the best pain control, pain medication should be given regularly as prescribed while awake. Narcotic pain medication may cause constipation, nausea, vomiting, fever, itching, rash, and over-sedation. Narcotics are not recommended for children under 6.
- Advil, Motrin, or Ibuprofen and similar medications are permissible. **DO NOT** take aspirin.
- Take the antibiotics, if prescribed by your doctor, until they are gone.
- Carefully follow instruction for nausea medicine and numbing lollipops.
- FEVER:** Low-grade fever often occurs, usually relieved by Tylenol or other fever medications and drinking fluids. Call your doctor for a temperature that remains greater than 102 degrees after giving Tylenol, etc.
- SPEECH:** Nasal speech may occur temporarily after surgery. Nasal regurgitation can sometimes occur when drinking fluids.
- ICE PACK:** An ice pack should be applied to the neck for the first few days.
- VAPORIZER:** Use a cool mist vaporizer at the bedside during the recovery period and after, if helpful.
- SWELLING:** Swelling usually occurs in the tongue, uvula, and throat, slowly resolving after the first 7-10 days, with a foul odor often present during the healing process. A gray or white membrane will be present in the throat and mouth during the healing process, but it is usually not thrush.
- BLEEDING:** Bleeding may occur anytime after surgery. Bleeding is more likely during the seventh to tenth day, often due to dehydration, coughing, eating the wrong foods, or overexertion. Risks diminish after 14 days. If ANY BLEEDING occurs from the nose or throat, remain calm, lie flat on the abdomen, turning the face to the side, applying ice to the nose or neck, and call your doctor immediately at (912) 355-2335 or (912) 356-5330.
- RECOVERY:** A routine postoperative appointment should be made after surgery. Office staff will call you periodically after surgery. If any postoperative problems occur, call as soon as recognized, so evaluation can be arranged.