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## **POST-OPERATIVE ADVICE – TONSIL AND/OR ADENOID SURGERY**

### **What to expect and do after a Tonsillectomy and/or Adenoidectomy**

This procedure is usually done as a day-case, so you can expect to go home on the same day as the surgery.

### **Pain and pain control:**

Understand that a tonsillectomy is a **painful** procedure. Pain usually worsens for the first 4-7 days following surgery before it starts to improve. In adults the pain may last for 10 – 14 days. Pain control is thus the most important factor following a tonsillectomy and you will be provided with strong pain medication to help you through this time. **DO NOT WAIT FOR THE PAIN BEFORE GIVING THE PAIN MEDICINE.** Give it as prescribed.

### **Food and drink:**

It is of extreme importance that you / your child eats and drinks after the operation, even if swallowing hurts initially. The worst thing that can happen following a tonsillectomy is to get dehydrated. No special diet is required, although spicy or acidic foods will probably sting for a while. Food that requires chewing is preferred, as this chewing action helps prevent muscle spasm at the back of your throat.

### **What is normal:**

- Smelly breath and white patches where the tonsils used to be
- Painful ears - This is referred pain from the throat
- Mild fever the 1<sup>st</sup> day post-op
- Worsening of snoring for a couple of days - This is due to temporary swelling at the back of the throat and the nose

### **When to call me and/or go to the emergency department:**

- Bleeding
  - Minor bleeds do happen occasionally, but this should stop quickly. If there is persistent bleeding for more than 10 minutes, or significant bleeding, you should contact me immediately and go to the emergency department. While this is a rare occurrence, it is scary and can be dangerous requiring early assessment.

### **Some further information:**

- Routine antibiotics are not required as there is no evidence that they have any effect on outcome.
- Most patients go through a dip where the pain worsens again after an initial short period of improvement. This is usually at around day 4 or 5 in children, and day 7 or 8 in adults. Rather continue with the pain medication as prescribed for at least 1 week following surgery, even if it seems you / your child may not require painkillers after a few days.
- There is usually no need to see my patients for a post-tonsillectomy / post-adenoidectomy consult. If there are however any concerns, please call the office and we will make an appointment.