

Tonsillectomy Postoperative Care Instructions:

- **Recovery:** On average, most patients are fully recovered after 10-14 days. However, some feel better in just a few days, while others take as long as 3 weeks to recover. It is common for the most discomfort to be felt during days 5-8. We would advise you to have 2 weeks of leave from regular activities. We recommend that you stay within 30 mins drive to a public hospital with ENT services for 14 nights following the procedure.
- **Pain:** It is common to experience throat pain after the procedure. Ear pain is very common after tonsillectomy. Patient/ your child may have jaw and neck discomfort as a result of positioning in the operating room. Many have difficulty eating, drinking, and sleeping as a result of pain. Severity of pain may fluctuate during the recovery from mild to severe, and pain may last up to 14 days.
- **Pain Control:** For pain management, please medicate every 4-6 hours with paracetamol or as directed by your surgeon. Do not exceed 4 doses in a 24-hour period. For the first week please use regular paracetamol 4 times per day regardless of the pain, after 7 days then use as needed only. Ibuprofen can be used additionally if the paracetamol is not providing enough pain relief. A chewing gum, or a humidifier in the child's room will also help to alleviate pain.
- **Nausea and Vomiting:** Your child may experience some nausea and vomiting from the general anaesthetic. This usually occurs during the first 24-36 hours following surgery. Please contact the office if your child is having ongoing difficulties with nausea and vomiting.
- **Fever:** It is not uncommon for a child to have a low grade fever for several days after surgery. A fever should be treated with paracetamol.
- **Breathing:** Due to swelling, snoring and mouth breathing are common after a tonsillectomy. Normal and often improved breathing should resume 10-14 days after surgery.
- **Scabs:** A membrane or scab will form where the tonsils have been removed. It is often thick and white in appearance and may result in bad breath. The scab will eventually fall off as the throat heals, usually 5-10 days after the procedure. This is not a sign of an infection and does not required antibiotics.

- **Bleeding:** If your child has any bleeding from the mouth or nose, he or she needs to immediately seek attention from the on-call ENT doctor in the Emergency Room. Even a small amount of bleeding can indicate a serious problem and should be evaluated right away. If bleeding occurs from the nose or mouth that is more than a tablespoon full or the patient/ your child has a blood vomit, along with contacting 000, take the patient / child to the nearest public emergency department via ambulance.
- **Speech:** If your child's tonsils were very large, the sound of the voice may be different postoperatively.
- **Drinking:** It is important that your child stays hydrated postoperatively. Many children are reluctant to drink because of pain. Offer and encourage fluids frequently. Fluids can include juice, soft drinks, popsicles and jelly. Hydrolyte liquid or ice blocks are excellent if your child is not drinking enough. As long as your child is hydrated enough to urinate at least daily then it is ok to stay home and continue the encouragement of oral intake. If you are concerned that your child is significantly dehydrated then a review by a doctor is encouraged.
- **Eating:** There is no food restriction after the surgery. We encourage rough food such as toast if tolerated but many patients will prefer softer foods initially. The sooner eating and chewing are resumed, the faster your child will likely recover. Many children are uninterested in eating for up to a week. As long as liquids are regularly consumed, there is no need to be too concerned with eating. Any weight that is lost is usually regained when a normal diet resumes.
- **Activity:** Most children rest at home for several days after the procedure. It is recommended that a child avoid vigorous activity for 14 days, as there is a risk of bleeding up to 14 days after surgery. Your child may return to school 14 days after the procedure. Please do not travel away from the local area during the three weeks after surgery. We encourage you to stay within 30 mins drive of a public hospital with after-hours ENT services.

- **Follow up:** Your child will be seen 4-6 weeks after surgery. If an appointment has not been established, please call the office to schedule one.

Dr Alok Mohorikar
MB,BS, FRACS.

Dr Georgina King
MB,BS, FRACS.