



Post-op adenoidectomy instructions

Recovery versus healing

Adenoidectomy is a day surgery procedure, but recovery can be more difficult for some patients. Full healing can be expected by seven days post-surgery at which time normal activities can be resumed. Typical recuperation takes a few days, but recovery may take longer for older children, teenagers and young adults. An adenoidectomy usually requires less recovery time than a tonsillectomy.

Pain management

Pain management following surgery is important, and pain is treated most effectively before it begins. Symptoms may include ear pain, headache and neck pain as opposed to the sore throat that is typical following a tonsillectomy. You should give ibuprofen (Motrin or Advil) for three to four days following surgery, then for a few more days as long as there is pain. If Motrin or Advil are not enough, the doctor will give a prescription for a narcotic pain medication. Excessive fussiness and refusal to swallow or take liquids may be signs of pain in younger children. In older patients, there may be neck pain, ear pain or headache. If not controlled by Advil or Motrin, give the narcotic pain medication.

Make sure the patient drinks enough liquids to remain adequately hydrated following surgery because drinking enough fluids will lessen the pain and speed of recovery. Mild dehydration increases the discomfort experienced following adenoidectomy surgery. Encourage drinking fluids as much as possible. Sport drinks such as Gatorade help replace fluids and nutrients if the patient does not want solid food. It's best to give food and liquids after the pain medication.

A normal diet following surgery is fine once the patient has recovered from anesthesia. Begin with liquids or light foods, but a normal diet can be resumed as soon as the patient is awake and alert.

Other things to know post-surgery

The patient should rest for a week following surgery, although some children and teenagers may resume normal activities sooner. Once the patient is fever-free and the pain is under control, normal activities are OK.

Fever following surgery is common and may be as high as 102° F periodically for several days. Increased temperature does not indicate infection, but may make the discomfort worse. Give the prescription pain medication (which contains acetaminophen, the same active ingredient as Tylenol) or ibuprofen (Motrin or Advil) as needed for fever relief. Sustained fever over 103°F is likely due to another cause. This could be from a virus or some other infection not related to the surgery.

Nausea and vomiting following adenoid surgery are unlikely. Bleeding following an adenoidectomy is also rare. Other problems such as bad breath and voice changes should go away as the patient recovers.

If you have any questions, please call the ENT Care for Kids office at 214-696-8900.