

# Instructions after Surgery: Adenoidectomy

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## **What should I expect after surgery?**

While usually not as bad as the pain that follows tonsil removal, children will often have a **sore throat** for up to two weeks after adenoidectomy. This is often worse between day 5 and 10, when the "scab" in the back of the throat falls off.

It is very common for children who have had this surgery to have **ear pain**, since the same nerves go to the ears and the throat. You also may notice bad breath as the adenoid site heals over.

It is also common for children to have a "**whiny**" voice for several weeks to a month after the operation. This is because there is more room in the back of the throat, resulting in more airflow through the nose during speech. Eventually, most children compensate for this as the palate (the roof of the mouth) adjusts to make a seal during speech. If this persists for more than a month, call me for further evaluation.

## **What medication is necessary after adenoid surgery?**

Antibiotics are not necessary, but pain control is important. A good option is acetaminophen (Tylenol®). **Aspirin should not be used** for 2 weeks before and after surgery, as it can cause bleeding. In the past other "NSAID" drugs like ibuprofen (Motrin® or Advil®) were avoided because of concerns about bleeding. However, research has shown them to be safe and effective for pain relief after this surgery. While Tylenol or ibuprofen can be taken alone, **the best approach** is to combine them, **alternating** them every 3 hours (**6 hours** between doses of Tylenol, and **6 hours** between doses of ibuprofen).

Steroids can also be helpful with pain, but they can cause stomach issues, especially if taken with NSAIDs. I will call these in when needed, if the NSAIDs and the Tylenol aren't enough, and all three types of medication can be used in the same patient. However, try to minimize combining steroids and ibuprofen, if possible.

## **What should my child eat and drink after the surgery?**

In general, patients who have had only adenoid removal do not have the significant problems with eating that children have after tonsillectomy. However, it is very important for your child to drink fluids, to **avoid becoming dehydrated**. Liquids with nutritional value (such as milk shakes) are better, since they also provide calories if a child isn't eating much. Drinks such as Gatorade or Pedialyte are better than water, since they provide needed nutrients. Some of these (such as Pedialyte) are available as ice pops, which may be better for a child recovering from surgery.

## **What do I do in case of bleeding?**

Bleeding (from the nose or the mouth) is rare after adenoidectomy. If you see this, call my office phone number at any time.

## **Can my child swim, go to school, or engage in other activities?**

Once children are feeling better, there is no medical reason to restrict moderate activity. Extreme activities (such as weight lifting or strenuous competition) should be avoided as they may raise the blood pressure and cause bleeding during the two weeks after the operation. They can go back to school as soon as they feel well enough, just make sure that the teacher and/or school nurse knows that they had surgery.

## **What about follow up?**

The follow up is generally three weeks after the surgery. In most cases, an in-person visit is not absolutely necessary. While of course I am happy to see you in the office if you prefer, I realize that such appointments can be difficult for busy families. If there are no concerns that need to be addressed in person, you may just contact my office to schedule a telemedicine postoperative video visit.