

## Tonsillectomy and Adenoidectomy

# Pre-Procedure Care Instructions

### ***Understanding your procedure.***

You've been scheduled for a tonsillectomy, adenoidectomy, or both with ENT Specialty Care. We have gathered some helpful patient information for you to review both before and after your procedure. If for any reason you need to reschedule your surgery, please call our office right away

### ***What is a Tonsillectomy or Adenoidectomy?***

A tonsillectomy is the removal of the tonsils, which sit on the left and right sides of the throat. An adenoidectomy is the removal of the adenoids, located at the very back of the nose. Sometimes both are removed at the same time.

### ***How is the procedure performed?***

These procedures are done through the mouth, without any external incisions. In most cases, stitches are not needed.



### ***Why are they done?***

Tonsillectomy and adenoidectomy may help alleviate problems your tonsils and adenoids may be causing, including breathing obstruction, infections, difficulty swallowing, congestion, and throat pain, among many others.

### ***How to Prepare for Your Procedure***

*Because your procedure will require anesthesia, it is very important to follow these instructions to prepare for your surgery in the method that fits your age category. Coming into your surgical appointment with an empty stomach is required for a safe and successful procedure. Do not take any pain medication (including for arthritis) except Tylenol for 2 weeks before your surgery. Discuss your current prescriptions with your doctor at least 2 weeks prior to surgery.*



***For Infants and Babies up to Age 1:***

- Starting 2 hours before scheduled surgery time, absolutely nothing by mouth
- Up to 2 hours before surgery, may have glucose water
- Up to 4 hours before surgery, may have breast milk or formula
- Up to 6 hours before surgery, may have solid foods
- No pain medication other than Tylenol for 2 weeks before the procedure

***For Children Ages 1-5:***

- Starting 4 hours before scheduled surgery time, absolutely nothing by mouth
- Up to 4 hours before surgery, may have clear liquids (water, apple juice, etc.)
- Up to 6 hours before surgery, may have solid foods
- No pain medication other than Tylenol for 2 weeks before the procedure

***For Adults and Children Ages 6+:***

- Starting 6 hours before scheduled surgery time, absolutely nothing by mouth
- Up to 6 hours before surgery, may have clear liquids (water, tea, apple juice, black coffee with no cream, etc.)
- Up to 8 hours before surgery, may have solid foods
- No aspirin or pain medication other than Tylenol for 2 weeks before the procedure

***For All Ages—No Aspirin for 2 weeks before and after surgery.***

This means no Aspirin or Aspirin-containing medicines, including AlkaSeltzer, Anacin, Ascliptin, BC, Bufferin, Cheracol Capsules, Cope, Coricidin, Darvon Compound, Firoinat, Dristan, Empirin, Excedrin, Midol, Sine-Aid, Sine-Off, Percodan, Naprosyn, Motrin, Clinoril, Stendin, Tramancin, Vanquish, and many others. If in doubt, please check with us. Please inquire about other prescription medications you are currently on. *If for any reason you need to reschedule your surgery, please call us right away.*

***Day of Surgery***

Your procedure will include the use of anesthetics to keep you comfortable during surgery. Adult patients should arrange to have someone else with to drive them to and from their surgery. If you are required to stay overnight, your doctor will discuss this with you ahead of time. Follow our guidelines for enhancing your recovery, which will be provided to you in a separate handout.

## Tonsillectomy and Adenoidectomy

# Post-Procedure Care Instructions

### **Following Your Procedure**

Most adults and children over four years old will be able to go home once the immediate effects of anesthesia wear off. To enhance your recovery, please follow these guidelines. Everything you need to know should be covered here, but please contact us if you have any further concerns. Expect to spend several days letting your body rest, heal, and recover.

### **When to Call**

Call our offices right away if you have any questions or concerns—we want you to feel comfortable contacting us anytime throughout your recovery period, especially if you experience the following:

- Signs of dehydration, including dark sunken eyes, little-to-no fluid intake or output, and dry eyes, mouth, and skin
- Abnormal bleeding that does not stop with use of ice-cold water, ice chips, or our other recovery tips
- Uncontrollable pain despite the use of prescription pain medications and Tylenol

Call **612.871.1144** Monday through Friday from 9:00 a.m. until 5:00 p.m. with any concerns. Our answering service will contact the on-call provider for urgent after-hours needs. Remember, you can also seek care at urgent care or an emergency room. Call **911** in case of an emergency.







### **Follow-up Care**

*If you've been instructed to schedule a follow-up visit, please make arrangements before leaving the hospital. For tonsillectomy and/or adenoidectomy patients with no other procedures (such as ear tube placement), a follow-up appointment may not be necessary. Your surgeon may ask to see you 3-5 weeks after surgery, but usually no visit is needed. (Remember, this applies only to those patients who have had a tonsillectomy and/or adenoidectomy without any other ancillary procedure.). However, if there are any non-urgent questions or if you desire to be seen, please feel free to make an appointment for approximately four weeks after your surgery.*

### **11 Tips for Enhanced Recovery**

- 1.** Adult patients should not bend down, lift more than 10 pounds, strain to reach, travel long distances, or engage in physical activities (gym workouts, running, swimming, active play, etc.) for 2 weeks after surgery. Children should limit activity to quiet play, and be excused from gym class for 2 weeks. Children who have had an adenoidectomy (without tonsillectomy) can resume normal activity level once they feel up to it.
- 2.** Kids can return to school after about 5–7 days. Adults can return to work when they feel up to it, unless it is a physical labor job, in which case 10 recovery days off from work is recommended. You will require longer periods out of school/work if you are still using narcotics for pain.
- 3.** Stay ahead of pain and discomfort by sticking to a routine of regular pain medication. It is best to take the medications on a schedule, as opposed to waiting until the pain becomes uncomfortable. Follow your doctor's instructions. Remember, pain can be controlled, but may not be completely alleviated. Aspirin and aspirin-containing products must be avoided throughout your recovery. Your doctor will tell you if it is OK to take ibuprofen.
- 4.** Remember, narcotic pain medications can be dangerous if taken more than prescribed. Side effects can include nausea, vomiting, mood changes, constipation, and even decreased breathing. Be careful with their use and follow all instructions. Remember to maximize non-narcotic pain relievers (such as Tylenol). Narcotics prescriptions can be filled at our office M–F, 9-5. Remember, we cannot fill or refill these on nights or weekends, so it is important to plan ahead.

5. Aside from general discomfort, patients may also experience short bouts of severe shooting pain into the ears. Jaw pain and tightness may also occur as a result of the muscle spasms from the local irritation of the back and sides of the throat. A stiff neck is common in adenoidectomy patients. Nausea can be attributed to narcotic pain medicine, anesthesia, or the surgery itself.
6. These other methods of pain relief on top of medication can help further alleviate discomfort:
  - Consuming anything icy cold—popsicles, ice chips, snow cones, smoothies, ice cream, shakes, etc. You can also use ice packs. Cold reduces swelling and helps soothe nerve endings, while heat does the opposite.
  - Chewing helps break any jaw muscle spasms. This also encourages saliva production and swallowing, both of which aid in healing.
  - Elevating the upper body on 2-3 pillows helps reduce swelling.
  - Using a cool mist humidifier at the bedside reduces morning dryness, especially in the winter.
  - Distraction with non-physical activities can help take the mind off of pain. Watching movies, playing video games, and listening to radio, music, podcasts, or audio books are all great options.
  - Throat stiffness and pain may be reduced by gargling with a mixture of ½ teaspoon of salt per 8 ounces of warm water.
  - Tonsillectomy patients should sip on fluids throughout the day to keep throat secretions from becoming too thick and to exercise the throat muscles.
7. Light bleeding may occur at any time after surgery, but is most common at 2 days to 2 weeks after the procedure as the healing scab starts to melt away.

It is common to see minor streaking of blood in saliva, which can be easily controlled by sucking on ice chips, gargling ice water, or chewing gum. Significant bleeding—such as a sudden burst of bright red blood from the mouth or nose, coughing up large clots, or vomiting blood—is abnormal, and should be assessed immediately; notify our office and/or go to the emergency room. Our doctors are always available to treat this problem 24/7. Although rare, if you feel bleeding is life threatening, dial 911. **Call 612-871-1144 for after-hours emergencies.**
8. Staying hydrated with water is extremely important for all patients, regardless of their procedure. In addition to water, Gatorade, Powerade, Pedialyte and other sports rehydration drinks are excellent ways to stay hydrated. An easy way to determine proper fluid intake is to make note of urine color. Darker urine can be a sign of inadequate hydration. In children, closely monitor urine output. Dry eyes, dry mouth, and dry skin are other signs of severe dehydration. Contact us immediately if you are unable to sustain proper hydration!
9. For the first 3 days, plan to eat soft, cool foods. For two weeks, avoid hot, spicy, salty, citrusy, and dry or rough-textured foods. Cold drinks are best. Progress your diet based on throat comfort level. Ice cream, yogurt, Jell-O, eggs, cooled soup, macaroni and cheese, and mashed potatoes are all good choices after surgery. Progress your diet based on your comfort level, avoiding anything sharp that could irritate a healing wound.
10. You may be given a prescription for an antibiotic. If so, please take all of this medicine as directed.
11. If you are taking other prescription medications, please check with your doctor as to when to resume taking them.