

Tonsillectomy

Post-operative Information

What can you expect in the 14 days after this operation that is “NORMAL”

- Pain and discomfort in the throat especially when your mouth is dry after waking up in the morning or sleeping during the day. **“A DRY THROAT IS A SORE THROAT.”**
- Bad breath as the tonsil areas are raw before they heal.
- The areas where the tonsils were removed will appear yellowish –white. This is normal as this is how “raw wounds” in the mouth heal. This is not an infection.
- Your taste may be abnormal for a few weeks and everything may taste “metallic.”
- Earache- this is referred pain from your tonsils and jaws and **NOT** an ear infection.
- Being tired and grumpy- the pain relief medication and effects of the operation can cause this.
- Increased pain over several days, adjust pain medication as required.

What can you do to make your recovery easier?

Pain Control

- Take your pain medication regularly and keep the pain under control. Do not wait for severe pain to start taking medication.
- The pain is worst in early hours of morning and late at night. Drink as much fluid as possible. Remember, **“A DRY THROAT IS A SORE THROAT.”**
- Cold temperature fluids like ice chips, icy poles and ice-cream can help soothe the throat.
- Gargling with a mouthwash that has a local anesthetic is excellent. This may burn for the first few seconds but then numbs the throat especially before eating and early in the morning on awakening.
- You will realize very quickly, which of the pain medications that you have been prescribed works quicker and better for you.
- Chewing gum (not very strongly flavoured) regularly will help your throat muscles and prevent spasms.
- **MAKE SURE YOU EAT REGULARY (as close to a normal diet as possible) AS THIS HELPS YOU HEAL FASTER AND CLEANS THE TONSIL CAVITIES. NOT EATING CAN LEAD TO INCREASED RISK OF BLEEDING.**
- In the case of younger children, adequate fluid intake is more important than food intake and any favourite liquid or icy poles should be encouraged.
- Avoid spicy and very hot foods as the throat is more sensitive.
- If you become nauseous and sick from your pain medication, try work out which tablets are causing this and stop them immediately. You may be sensitive to its ingredients (e.g. Codeine, Tramadol).

What to do if there is any bleeding

- In the immediate period after your operation, it is normal to taste a little blood in your mouth or see a few specks of blood in your saliva.
- If scabs loosen in your throat after a few days, you may experience a little bleeding which will usually stop on its own. Try not to panic, remain calm and gargle with ice-cold water for a few minutes (young children can suck some ice), rest sitting up and wait at least a few minutes for the blood to clot and for it to stop. If this does not stop go immediately to your closest Emergency Department.
- In very few cases, you may experience stronger blood flow from one tonsil that will not stop and that is distressing. Try gargling with ice cold water and go to your closest emergency department. If you are concerned, you can always hold your finger inside your mouth over a gauze or tissue pad on the area of the tonsil.

You should have an appointment to see me for a follow up and review between 10 days to 3 weeks after your operation.

Once you have completed this 14-day recovery period, you will soon see the benefits of having your tonsils removed and hopefully enjoy greater health in the future. I wish you a speedy and trouble free recovery.