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Instructions after Tonsillectomy

1. There is always discomfort after a tonsillectomy. We are aware of it and deeply sympathetic toward it. Some patients are quite miserable for ten days after tonsillectomy and others are not.
2. Most of the discomfort is due to muscle soreness, not to the raw surface. For this reason, first swallows in the morning and during sleeping are always the worst. **The patient may awaken from a sound sleep with throat pain referred into the ear as an "earache".**
3. Chewing pleasant flavored gum (30 minutes before meals) forms saliva and increases the rate of gentle swallowing which decreases the pain.
4. Use the pain medicine regularly for discomfort. You should take the pain medicine every four hours as needed for pain. Taking some of the medication 30-60 minutes before meals helps the swallowing. If your doctor allows ibuprofen, you may take it as directed on the medicine bottle in between doses of pain medicine. **PLEASE ASK IF IBUPROFEN IS ALLOWED.**
5. Minimal activity is advisable the first day at home but strict bed rest is not necessary. **NO STRENUOUS ACTIVITY OR WORK FOR 14 DAYS, UNLESS YOUR SURGEON HAS TOLD YOU OTHERWISE.**
6. **BE SURE THAT FLUID INTAKE IS ADEQUATE.** Supplement it with popsicles, Jell-O, custards, and so forth. Orange juice or lemonade may be uncomfortable. Eating five or six light meals for the first few days is better than three large meals. **PLEASE BE SURE THE PATIENT IS URINATING SEVERAL TIMES DAILY.**
7. If there is any indication of fever, take the temperature and notify the office if it exceeds 101 degrees. A bad breath is usual, but if it is exceedingly foul and accompanied by generalized aching, please notify the office.
8. Between the 5th and 10th postoperative day, the scab comes off the throat surface. More soreness may be experienced for 24 hours. In a few patients, some bleeding occurs as it does with the lifting of any scab. Do not be alarmed. Bleeding is not a terrible thing and is usually readily managed. If it occurs, the day should be spent quietly. **IF BLEEDING PERSISTS LONGER THAN 30 MINUTES OR IS SEVERE, PLEASE CALL THE OFFICE.**
9. Your follow up appointment is scheduled for _____. If this time is inconvenient, please call the office and change it.