

TONSILLECTOMY (+/- ADENOIDS) POST-OP INSTRUCTIONS



Cairns ENT Pty Ltd

DR PHILIP JUMEAU
MBBS (HON), FRACS

ABN: 19 112 137 854

● FOOD:

Any foods can be consumed after the surgery although soft foods are obviously less painful to ingest. If one can follow a basic diet including foods with some substance (e.g. bread) then they tend to get better a bit faster.

● PAIN:

It is normal to experience significant pain in the first week following tonsil removal and it is not unusual to feel you are not making any progress until the second week after the surgery. Regular pain relief should be used over this time to maintain as normal a food intake as possible and try to get some sleep at night. Children should have a dose of panadol (paracetamol) appropriate for their weight regularly 4 times per day (30-45 mins before meals and bedtime). If pain is not well controlled then Oxycodone Syrup can be used in addition to Paracetamol at the same dosing interval as Panadol. The dose will be on the bottle (approximately 0.1mg/kg bodyweight). This will be quite necessary over the first week post-operatively.

For adults Panadeine Forte (**or** Panadol and Tramadol) are for pain. One to two tablets can be taken every 4 hours (max 8 per day) as required. It is recommended this be kept quite regular over the first week. Use panadol instead if your pain is not too bad. Panadeine Forte potently causes constipation and an artificial fibre supplement should be used in conjunction (e.g. Metamucil, Angiofibre etc). Tramadol is a strong pain killer that should be used with panadol for they have a strong combination effect. Use Panadol alone if pain is not too bad, not Tramadol alone.

You are expected to start feeling better each day in the second week where pain relief can be used as required. You will not feel back to normal until 14-18 days post-operatively.

● BLEEDING:

As your surgeon has outlined bleeding is a significant risk in the two weeks following tonsil removal. Appropriate measures need to be taken by the hospital/surgeon and yourself if this potential risk occurs. Any bright blood that is noted following your surgery is not normal and a medical review is required. This can be a few drops staining the saliva to a very large distressing bleed.

TONSILLECTOMY (+/- ADENOIDS) POST-OP INSTRUCTIONS (cont.)

If you note some light bleeding that has settled then a doctor (your GP, surgeon or emergency staff) should look in your throat to check there are no clots or ongoing bleeding. If this keeps recurring you should go to emergency and your surgeon needs to be contacted (make sure the emergency staff do this). If the bleeding is more than light then you need to go to an emergency department (not your local doctor) and your surgeon needs to be contacted. You may need to call an ambulance if bleeding is severe or you are alone. Occasionally a return to theatre will be necessary. Do not travel by air (at all) or on the road to anywhere more than 1.5 hours from the Cairns Base Hospital for an absolute minimum of 14 days following your surgery. The surgeon cannot help you if he cannot get to you and unavailable or appropriately skilled back-up can be life-threatening. The risk of serious problems is very small if you simply stay where help is available for the full 14 days.

* Dr Jumeau does not downplay the potential seriousness of bleeding and will always be available either himself or have another fully qualified ENT surgeon available to offer advice, or if necessary, manage this problem 24 hrs a day. Please make sure the emergency staff at your hospital are aware and contact your surgeon.

● ACTIVITY:

No exercise or activity more than walking (but not as exercise) should be undertaken for the 14 days post-op. Do not drink alcohol in this time. Both these activities increase your chance of bleeding. Smoking is allowed but should be limited as much as possible to allow better healing.

● ANTIBIOTICS:

These will be given for the first week following your surgery. The throat area always has a white covering following tonsil surgery for at least 2 weeks. This looks like pus but unless there is a fever or worsening pain infection is unlikely.

● PROBLEMS/ FOLLOW-UP:

If minimal oral intake is possible and you are concerned about dehydration or have other problems then you can contact your surgeons' rooms within hours on 07 40510890 or after hours your surgeon is available through the Hospital switchboard where you had your operation (explain you have recently had surgery).

Cairns Base Hospital - Ph: 4226 6333

Cairns Private Hospital – Ph: 4052 5200

An appointment should be made for follow-up at 2-3 weeks after your operation.

Dr Philip Jumeau
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