

After your Child's Tonsillectomy and/or Adenoidectomy

We have removed your child's tonsils from the back of their throat (**tonsillectomy**) and/or adenoids from the back of their nose (**adenoidectomy**). This sheet gives you instructions on how to care for your child after their procedure. It supplements the information the staff discussed with you.



SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS

After a tonsillectomy and/or adenoidectomy, it is normal for your child to:

- Not want to eat solid food for several days. This is okay as long as your child is drinking well
- Have a sore throat, pain, or discomfort, especially at night. This will usually get worse between days 5 to 7, then slowly get better
- Have ear pain that usually gets better within 7 days
- Be constipated
- Have a white coating over the tonsil area
- Have bad breath
- Have blood-tinged saliva or throw up old blood (that looks like used coffee grounds)
- Feel tired, irritable, depressed, and have low energy
- Have some nausea from the anesthesia (freezing medicine) or pain medicine
- Snore when sleeping, until the swelling goes down.

It may take up to 10 days for your child to be able to resume normal activities and return to school.



Call your child's surgeon if they have any of the following:

- A fever at or above 38.3°C (101°F)
- An earache with a fever
- Pain that does not get better, or gets worse, even after taking medicine
- Nausea (feeling sick to your stomach) and vomiting (throwing up) that does not go away
- An allergic reaction to the antibiotics, such as a rash, swelling, or difficulty breathing
- Trouble swallowing liquids properly

Go to your nearest emergency room if your child has:

- Bleeding bright red blood from the nose or mouth.
- Signs of dehydration, such as:
 - » Crying with no tears
 - » Dry, sticky mouth and tongue
 - » Dark coloured pee
 - » Not peeing often or peeing less than 3 wet diapers a day
 - » Feeling tired and weak

MEDICINES

PAIN MEDICINE:

- Give your child acetaminophen (Tylenol®, Panadol®, Tempra®, or other brands), every 4 hours, as needed.
- If your child's pain is severe, you may also try switching between acetaminophen and ibuprofen (Advil®). To switch between pain medicine safely, always:
 - » **Wait 4 hours between doses of acetaminophen** and
 - » **Wait 6 hours between doses of ibuprofen.**

ANTIBIOTIC MEDICINE:

- Your child's surgeon may prescribe an antibiotic to prevent infection. Give it as directed, until finished.

OTHER MEDICINE:

- If your child is constipated, you can treat it with a mild over-the-counter laxative (from your local pharmacy). Otherwise, do not give over-the-counter medicine or natural health products, without consulting with your child's surgeon first.
- If your child's surgeon prescribed other medicine, give the medicine as directed, until finished.

APPOINTMENTS

- Go to the _____ clinic on DD / MM / YYYY at _____ (time) for your child's follow-up appointment with their surgeon.

RESULTS

- Your child's surgeon will discuss any results or reports with you at the follow-up visit, as advised.
- You can also register your child for My Humber Health (HRH's patient portal) at <https://myhumberhealth.ca>, to view a copy of any test results and reports.



TALK WITH ME (ABOUT MY CARE)

ACTIVITY:

- Have a responsible adult stay with your child overnight.
- Keep your child away from people who have an infection, like a cold or sore throat.
- Limit your child's activities to help prevent infection and bleeding. Promote quiet activities, such as reading or watching TV. Avoid strenuous activity that can make your child tired.
 - » If your child had an **adenoidectomy only**, they can resume normal activities 24 hours after surgery.
 - » If your child had a **tonsillectomy** (with or without an adenoidectomy), they must wait 10 days after surgery to resume normal activities.
 - » Do not keep your child in bed the whole time. Make sure your child gets up and moves around as they are able to.
- For the first 14 days after surgery, avoid travelling out of town. Complications are most likely to occur during this time.
- Do not let your child smoke or drink alcohol as it can slow healing and lead to complications.

DIET:

- Keep your child hydrated. Your child may drink water, milk, juice, flat Ginger Ale® or Sprite® as much as possible. They may also have Jell-O®, popsicles, yogurt, or ice cream.
 - » For the first 24 hours after surgery:
 - » Your child should drink at least 30 to 60 ml (2 to 4 tablespoons) of fluids every hour while awake. Overnight, wake your child up every 4 hours and give them at least 125 ml (8 tablepoons) of fluids to drink, for a total of 250 ml (16 tablespoons) of fluids.
 - » If they were not able to drink this amount overnight, give them extra liquids during the day to make up for the amount they missed.
 - » After 24 hours, make sure your child drinks enough fluids to stay hydrated. Your child is not drinking enough if they start to show signs of dehydration (see signs on page 1).
 - » Make sure your child drinks very carefully and slowly.
- After the first 24 hours, your child can add soft, bland foods to their diet. These foods are easy to swallow, such as mashed potatoes, eggs, noodles, pudding, and soup broth.
- Do not give your child foods or liquids that are hot or spicy, acidic, crunchy or hard, or dry. These may irritate the throat.
- Over the next 10 days, add more foods slowly, as tolerated, until they are eating their normal diet.





TALK WITH ME (ABOUT MY CARE) (CONTINUED)

MOUTH CARE:

- Your child may brush their teeth gently. However, do not let your child gargle or use mouthwash until after the follow-up visit with their surgeon.

PAIN AND DISCOMFORT:

For swelling:

- To reduce swelling and discomfort, keep your child's head elevated (head above the heart), even when sleeping (you can place 2 pillows under their head).

For pain:

- Give your child pain medicine during the day, as instructed (see **MEDICINES** on page 2).
- To reduce discomfort overnight, give your child pain medicine before bed. Then, wake your child up every 4 hours to give them another dose of pain medicine and small amounts of liquid to drink.
- If the surgeon prescribed a pain medicine for a sore throat, give it to your child 30 to 40 minutes before eating to make swallowing easier.

DRIVING *(if applicable)*:

- If your child is of driving age, do not let them drive a car for the first 24 hours after surgery.

SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS:

Please contact your child's surgeon if you have any other questions.