

Post Operative Instructions: Tonsillectomy and/or Adenoidectomy

Description of the Surgery

The tonsils are two pads of tissue located on both sides of the back of the throat. Adenoids sit high on each side of the throat behind the nose and the roof of the mouth. Tonsils and adenoids are often removed when they become enlarged and block the upper airway, leading to breathing difficulty. They are also removed when recurrence of tonsil infections or strep throat cannot be successfully treated by antibiotics. The procedure to remove the tonsils is called a tonsillectomy; excision of the adenoids is an adenoidectomy. Both are usually performed concurrently. T&A is an outpatient surgical procedure lasting between 15 and 30 minutes and performed under general anesthesia. Normally, the young patient will remain at the hospital or surgicenter for 1 to 2 hours after surgery for observation.

When the Tonsillectomy Patient Comes Home

Most children require 7 to 14 days to recover from the surgery. The following guidelines are recommended:

Drinking: The most important requirement for recovery is for the patient to drink plenty of fluids. Try to offer juice, soft drinks, popsicles, Jell-O, pudding, yogurt, apple sauce and ice-cream for encouragement. Some patients experience nausea and vomiting after the surgery caused by the general anesthetic. This usually occurs within the first 24 hours and resolves on its own. Contact your physician if there are signs of dehydration (urination less than 2-3 times a day or crying without tears).

Eating: Generally, we suggest soft food for the first 14 days as tolerated.

Pain: Nearly all children undergoing a tonsillectomy/adenoidectomy will have moderate to **severe** pain in the throat after surgery. Some may complain of an **earache** (because stimulation of the same nerve that goes to throat also travels to the ear), and a few may incur pain in the jaw and neck (due to positioning of the patient in the operating room).

What to Expect After the Operation

1. Low grade temperatures (up to 102), ear pain and neck pain are common symptoms after surgery.
2. Your child may actually seem worse between 4 and 7 days after surgery.
3. Your child may have been placed on antibiotics by your surgeon. If your child is unable to tolerate them, it is acceptable to stop the antibiotic.
4. If your child is not willing to swallow the pain medication, you can use tylenol suppositories which do not require a prescription.
5. DO NOT use aspirin or ibuprofen (such motrin, advil) for 2 weeks.
6. A cool mist vaporizer can help night time breathing.
7. Your child may have fluid coming out of the nose while drinking. This is due to a lack of muscle control in the throat. This will usually stop after 3 weeks.
8. Your child's voice may sound differently for several weeks after the operation.
9. DO NOT examine your child's throat with a flashlight. It is normal for the back of the throat and tongue to be covered with a white coating. These are healing eschars. Because of this, your child could have bad breath for up to 2 weeks.
10. All children lose weight after the operation. They will usually gain it back within a few weeks.
11. Your child may complain about an alteration in taste. The sense of taste should normalize within a few weeks.
12. Your child may have bad breath for several weeks.
13. Travel is not recommended for at least 2 weeks after surgery.

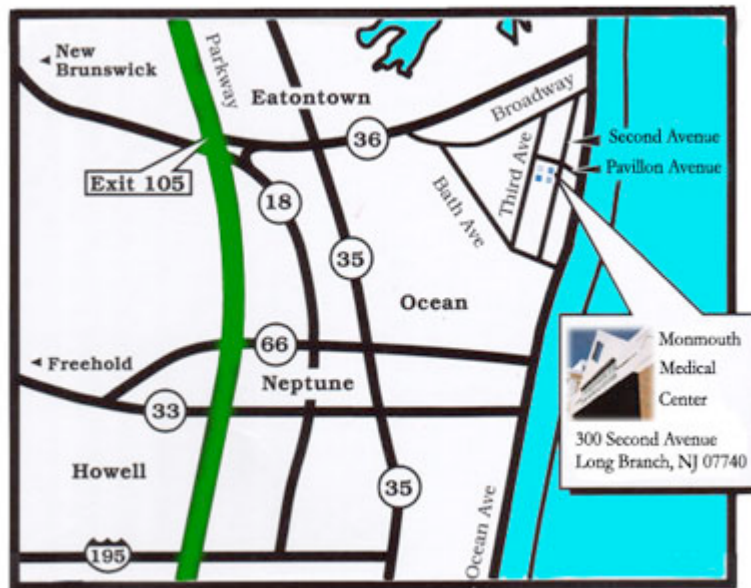
Bleeding After Tonsillectomy

Bleeding: With the exception of small specks of blood from the nose or in the saliva, bright red blood is usually not seen. If such bleeding occurs, contact your physician immediately **(732 389-3388)** and take your child to the emergency room at **Monmouth Medical Center**, in Long Branch, NJ. Bleeding is an indication that the scabs have become displaced, and that medical attention may be required. Have your child suck on an ice cube to slow the bleeding.

Monmouth Medical Center
300 Second Avenue, Long Branch, New Jersey 07740
PHONE: (732) 222-5200

How to Get to Monmouth Medical Center:

Monmouth Medical Center is located at 300 Second Avenue, Long Branch, N.J. It is easily accessible by car, train, and bus. Parking is available in the hospital parking garage.



From Points North and South:

Take the Garden State Parkway (Exit 105), Route 18 (Exit 13B) or Route 35 to Route 36 East. Stay on Route 36 until you reach Ocean Avenue. Make a right onto Ocean Avenue and proceed south until you see signs for the hospital and Pavilion Avenue. Make a right onto Pavilion Avenue, then turn left onto Second Avenue and the Monmouth Medical Center campus is on your right.

From Shore Points:

From Ocean Avenue, make a left onto Pavilion Avenue, then turn left onto Second Avenue and right into Monmouth Medical Center.