



Gloucestershire Hospitals
NHS Foundation Trust

Tonsillectomy and Adenotonsillectomy

Introduction

You have been given this leaflet because your child, or someone you care for has had a Tonsillectomy or Adenotonsillectomy. This leaflet contains information to help you know what to expect after having this procedure.

General Information

After your child's tonsillectomy, they should avoid contact with anyone with cough or cold symptoms. They should stay off school for at least ten days. Some children may need to take two weeks off school or other activities. It is usual to see some white spots at the back of your child's throat where their tonsils used to be. Your child may also have smelly breath and possibly ear pain.

Eating and drinking

Eating and drinking is an important part of your child's recovery. It is important that they eat all types of food, especially those that are chewy and crunchy. Eating different types of foods encourages the use of all the muscles of the mouth, which promotes healing and reduces the risk of post-operative bleeding.

Signs to look out for

- Temperature
- Vomiting
- Throat or tongue changes with a green or yellowish appearance

- Foul-smelling breath
- Severe pain that cannot be managed with the pain relief you have been given

If your child has one or more of the symptoms above, call your GP or 111. You can also call the Paediatric Assessment Unit (PAU) for advice within the first 24 hours; our contact information is listed below.

Attend your nearest Emergency department if your child:

- Spits, coughs or vomits blood
- Has any oozing or bleeding from the nose or mouth

Pain information

Pain after a tonsillectomy is very common for the first two weeks. The pain is usually worst between days 3-7 after the operation. Your child may have a sore throat, earache, or both.

Please refer to the separate leaflets 'Managing pain after your child's operation' and 'Morphine based medication after your child's operation' for more information about pain management and morphine administration. These leaflets include a chart to help you keep track of what pain relief you have given and the timings of doses.

If you find the pain relief you have been provided with is not enough to manage your child's pain, please contact your GP or a healthcare professional for advice.

Alternative forms of pain relief

Children over 6 years of age can take a version of paracetamol which melts on the tongue and is easier to swallow (e.g. FASTMELTS®), these are available to purchase over the counter. A throat spray called Difflam® may also be helpful in soothing your child's throat. These can be obtained from your local pharmacy if they have not been provided.

Contact information

For advice in the 24 hours after surgery:

Weekdays 7: 00 am to 7:30 pm:

Paediatric Day Unit: 0300 422 8452 / 8453

Weekends and after 7:30 pm:

GRH Paediatric Ward Co-ordinator:

Call 0300 422 2222 and ask for bleep 2425

After 24 hours, please contact your GP or NHS 111 for advice.

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