

What to Expect After Tongue Tie Repair

RM Rosenfeld

After Surgery

When you greet your child in the recovery room, their mood will be unpredictable. Some children sleep peacefully (lucky you!), but others are very unhappy. Crying or agitation relate more to a sense of disorientation, than to active pain or discomfort. Fortunately, most children do not recall the hour or so they spend in the recovery room. When your child is ready, the anesthesiologist will transfer them to the ambulatory holding area where they can have something to eat and drink. Most children will then be discharged from the hospital within 1-2 hours.

Pain and Diet

Pain is generally mild after surgery, and should subside rapidly over a few days. Tylenol may be used as often as necessary, but products that contain ibuprofen (e.g., Motrin, Advil) should be avoided because they may promote bleeding or oozing. Although pain is typically minimal, most children will be protective of their tongue because it feels different. If your child is reluctant to eat after surgery, limit the diet to liquids or to solid foods that are bland and require minimal chewing (pudding, yogurt, macaroni, etc.). Most children return to a normal feeding routine within a few days after surgery.

After Leaving the Hospital

Schedule an office visit for about *6 to 8 weeks* after surgery to check for complete healing of the tongue. By this time any stitches placed by your doctor should have absorbed (please note that stitches are not *always* used), but do not be alarmed if portions of one or two stitches still remain. If you have not arranged a post-operative visit prior to surgery, please call our office in the next few days because visits are generally scheduled several weeks in advance.

Some Things *Not* to Worry About

Temporary *swelling* or *indentation* of the tongue is common for a few days after surgery. *Limited tongue motion* may occur because of initial discomfort or awareness of the stitches. *Nausea* or *vomiting* may occur for up to 24 hours after anesthesia. *Fever* up to 101 degrees may persist for up to several days after surgery. A small amount of *bloody discharge* from the tongue tip or under surface is common, particularly during the first 24 hours.

When to Call Us

Call our office if 1) there is persistent or excessive bleeding, 2) your child has inadequate food or beverage intake, 3) fever is 102 degrees or higher *despite* acetaminophen (Tylenol), 4) swelling of the tongue begins to worsen, 5) pus or discharge develops under the tongue, or 6) your child seems to be getting worse—not better—as the days go by. Ask to speak with the nurse when you call; she will discuss it with the doctor and arrange timely follow-up.

I have received a copy of this information sheet.

Parent or Guardian _____ Relation to child _____

Child's name _____ Date _____