

What to Expect After Adenoidectomy

RM Rosenfeld

Adenoidectomy is a safe and effective surgical procedure that will provide your child with lasting benefits. The suggestions below are offered to help your child with a rapid recovery.

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 2 to 3 hours.

Diet & Activity

No special changes in diet are required after adenoidectomy. The adenoids are located where the back part of the nose joins the throat, an area which is protected from food and liquids by the palate. Let your child eat whatever they want after surgery; ice cream or other special foods are unnecessary. There are no strict rules for activity after surgery, other than to avoid contact sports, heavy exertion, or hanging upside down for 1-2 weeks. Encourage your child to get out of bed frequently, and to return to normal activity as soon as possible.

Dealing with Pain

Pain is generally not severe after adenoidectomy, but you can minimize your child's discomfort by 1) encouraging adequate food and liquid intake, 2) making sure they take all of the prescribed antibiotic, 3) distracting them with games and activities (new toys are particularly effective!), and by 4) reassuring them that within 2-3 days they should be getting back to normal. Acetaminophen (Tylenol) can be used liberally, and ibuprofen products (Motrin, Advil) can also be used as needed. Codeine and other narcotic pain relievers are unnecessary.

Some Things Not to Worry About

A *hoarse or abnormal voice* may occur for several days from the anesthesia tube and from a temporary stiffness of the palate. *Vomiting* may occur for up to 24 hours after anesthesia. *Snoring* may persist for 1-2 weeks because of temporary swelling of the tissues around the adenoids. *Fever* up to 101 degrees and *bad breath* may persist for up to several days after surgery. A small amount of *bloody discharge* from the nose 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) your child develops a severe stiff neck, 5) foul breath is persisting (without signs of improvement) after 2 weeks, or 6) your child seems to be getting worse—not better—as the days go by. Unless requested by your doctor, a *routine* post-operative office appointment is not necessary after adenoidectomy.

I have received a copy of this information sheet.

Parent or Guardian _____ Relation to child _____

Child's name _____ Date _____