

### WHAT TO EXPECT

#### **Fatigue**

The general anaesthetic, surgery and medications may cause your child to feel fatigued.

#### **Pain**

Over the first few post-operative days, your child's sore throat will worsen and can become very painful. Some patients also experience earache, due to referred pain. Sometimes, patients feel they are improving after a week, then start to have more pain again. It is very important to give your child the painkillers he/she has been prescribed and contact your doctor if he/she is struggling with pain.

#### **Throat**

Tonsillectomy leaves two raw surfaces in the throat that will become coated and white. This is normal and will disappear by the fourth week.

#### **Bleeding**

A serious complication of tonsillectomy is bleeding from the tonsil wounds. This may occur up to two weeks after surgery. Patients with bleeding usually cough up or spit out bright red blood or clots.

If your child has any significant bleeding (brisk bleeding, lasting more than 1 minute) at any time, promptly take him/her to your nearest public hospital Emergency Department.

### WHAT TO DO

#### **Fluids and oral intake**

It is very important that your child drinks plenty of fluids and stays well hydrated in the post operative period. This will help reduce pain and discomfort. Encourage a normal diet.

There is no real restriction on what should be eaten. Whatever your child feels comfortable with is fine. Avoid very hot, spicy or acidic foods to prevent discomfort.

Patients who do not eat and drink well, can become dehydrated, then further intake is limited by increased discomfort so a negative cycle develops which culminates in unfavourable conditions in the region of the healing tonsillar fossae which can lead to infection or bleeding.

#### **Pain relief**

Your doctor will advise you about pain medication which your child will need to take regularly for the first week at least. Aim to give your child medication half an hour before meals, this will make eating more comfortable.

- 1) Paracetamol (Panadol, Panamax) should be taken regularly every 6 hours, up to the maximal daily dosage for your child's weight. Do not give more than 4 doses/day.
- 2) In addition,
  - a) Ibuprofen (Nurofen, Brufen) can be taken, as needed, every 6 hours, up to the maximal dosage for your child's weight. Do not give more than 3 doses/day.
  - b) You may have received a prescription for Oxycodone, (Endone), which can be taken every 4-6 hourly, as required. It is especially useful before going to bed, but should be used throughout the day if Paracetamol and Ibuprofen have been taken and your child is still finding it difficult to drink.

Do not exceed the maximum dose of medications.

Codeine-containing medication (such as Painsip) should not be taken

Ibuprofen may cause stomach upset.

Oxycodone may cause nausea, constipation or drowsiness.

If a medication side effect is troubling you, seek advice from your surgeon or see your GP.

If your child's pain relief is insufficient, contact your surgeon or see your GP.

If your child is drinking less than normal amounts, the pain medications may need to be revised and you should contact your surgeon or see your GP.

**Activity**

As much as possible try to avoid exercise or overexertion. For example activities such as trampolining/swimming should be avoided. Contact with people with known colds or flu should be avoided. Generally children will be well enough to return to daycare/kindergarten/school after 2 weeks. Patients are not permitted to fly until 4 weeks after surgery.

**Bleeding**

In the event of significant bleeding (generally anything over a teaspoon or continuous bleeding) please seek urgent medical assistance, either by contacting the rooms or attending the nearest public hospital with an emergency department.

**Post Operative Appointment**

Your child will need to see your surgeon in the office about 4 weeks after surgery, unless otherwise arranged.

**IMPORTANT INFORMATION**

Attend your nearest Emergency Department for serious complications e.g bleeding or prolonged vomiting or drowsiness.