

## Tonsillectomy and/or adenoidectomy (with a bleeding disorder)

### What is a tonsillectomy and adenoidectomy?

Tonsillectomy is removal of the tonsils. Adenoidectomy is removal of the adenoids. If they are done together, the surgery is often called a “T and A.”

### What can I expect after surgery?

Because children with bleeding disorders have an increased risk for bleeding after this surgery, it is generally recommended that they stay overnight in the hospital for close observation.

It is common to have an upset stomach and vomiting (throwing up) during the first 24 hours after surgery.

After surgery, DDAVP and Amicar® may be given by IV (in the vein) to help control bleeding. These medicines are important to the healing process, so your child will stay in the hospital until able to take them by mouth.

Your child will be given pain medicines after surgery. Children with bleeding disorders **must not** take aspirin or non-steroidal anti-inflammatory medicines, such as ibuprofen (Pediaprofin®, Motrin®, Advil®), Nalfon®, Naprosyn®, or Indocin®. These medicines increase the chance of bleeding.

Children with bleeding disorders **may** take acetaminophen (Tylenol®), Tylenol® with codeine, rofecoxib (Vioxx®), or celecoxib (Celebrex®) for pain and inflammation

(swelling). Please talk with your doctor, nurse practitioner, or nurse if you have questions about the medicines.

Your child’s throat may be sore for 2 weeks, especially when eating. The soreness may get better after a few days and then get worse again. Your child’s voice may change a little after surgery. Please call the hematology clinic if the soreness prevents taking the medicines.

Ear pain is common, often when swallowing, because the ear and throat have a common sensory nerve. Jaw spasms, (sudden twitching) may also occur and cause pain. Neck soreness is common after an adenoidectomy and usually lasts about one week.

You can expect your child to have bad breath for a few weeks.

Because of swelling in the throat, snoring is common after surgery but should go away after about two weeks.

### How should I care for my child?

Give liquids to drink. Keeping the throat moist eases discomfort and prevents dehydration (a dangerous condition in which the body gets dried out). Older children can chew gum to increase the flow of saliva and the rate of gentle swallowing. This decreases throat soreness and jaw spasms; it does not take the place of liquids.

Your child may need to continue the DDAVP and Amicar after going home, to help prevent bleeding. DDAVP may be given intravenously (IV) in the clinic, or by using the nasal spray Stimate® at home. With DDAVP or Stimate, please follow the **fluid restriction guidelines** given to you, and refer to the education sheets “DDAVP (desmopressin acetate) for bleeding disorders” or “Stimate (desmopressin acetate).”

Amicar is often given by mouth using pills or liquid. Children may not like the taste, but Amicar **must** be taken as often and as long as prescribed to prevent bleeding. See the education sheet “Amicar (aminocaproic acid).”

Give pain medicine regularly within the limits set by your doctor. Give it before bedtime and right after waking in the morning. Try to time other doses 30 minutes before meals to help make swallowing easier.

Pain medicine suppositories are available for younger children who often refuse to swallow medicines.

To prevent bleeding, avoid coughing, nose-blowing, clearing the throat, and spitting. Wipe the nose gently if needed. When sneezing, encourage your child to open the mouth and make a sound, to prevent pressure buildup.

Avoid coming in contact with people who have colds, flu, or infections.

## What can my child eat?

For the first day, give only cool, clear liquids such as apple juice, water, Popsicles®, Jell-O®, and pop that has lost its fizz. If your child has an upset stomach, give small amounts often. **Note:** Avoid red liquids, because if your child vomits, the vomit will be red, which may look like blood.

The second day, when your child wants them, start dairy and soft foods such as ice cream, milk shakes, smooth yogurt, and pudding. Liquids are more important than food. **Be sure your child drinks enough to urinate every 8 hours**, but if your child is using DDAVP or Stimate, follow the fluid guidelines for those medicines. Avoid citrus fruits and juices such as orange juice, as they may sting your child’s throat.

When your child wants them, add other soft foods such as applesauce, cooked cereal, canned fruits, cottage cheese, mashed potatoes, scrambled eggs, and warm or cold soups. Continue the soft diet for 1 to 2 weeks after surgery. Avoid foods with rough edges such as chips, crackers, hard candy, pretzels, popcorn, and pizza crusts for 2 weeks after surgery. Also avoid foods that are hot in temperature or spicy hot, until after your child sees the surgeon again.

## What else do I need to know?

Bleeding risk is greatest at two times: right after surgery and 7 to 10 days afterwards, when the scab may fall off. Please be sure to come back to the hematology clinic as instructed, about 6 days after surgery.

Do not travel out of reach of your doctor until after your child has seen the surgeon again (about 14 days).

Healing takes about **2 to 3** weeks. Encourage quiet activities indoors for the first 3 to 5 days. Children can usually return to school or day care after one week. **No** active play, gym, or running for 2 or 3 weeks after surgery. **Avoid** any activity that lowers the head below the heart (such as gymnastics or hanging from monkey bars) for 3 weeks after surgery, because this greatly increases the risk of bleeding.

### **Who and when should I call for help?**

#### **Call the hematology clinic if:**

- **any** bleeding
- vomiting blood or pink-tinged fluid
- nosebleed
- soreness prevents taking medicines
- problems giving Amicar, DDAVP, or Stimate

#### **Call the surgeon if:**

- pain is not relieved with medicines
- upset stomach and vomiting continues more than 24 hours after surgery
- temperature higher than 101° F
- signs of dehydration:
  - sunken eyes
  - dry, sticky lips
  - no urine for more than 8 hours
  - no tears

### **Questions?**

This sheet is not specific to your child, but provides general information. If you have any questions, call your child's doctor. For more information about the medicines used to prevent bleeding, please see the education sheet "Amicar (aminocaproic acid)," "DDAVP (desmopressin acetate) for bleeding disorders," or "Stimate (desmopressin acetate)."

For information on health, parenting, injury prevention, or community resources, please call the Family Resource Center at (612) 813-6816 or (651) 220-6368.

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