



Colorado Ear, Nose & Throat Group

Tonsillectomy & Uvulopalatopharyngoplasty (UPPP) Instructions

About Tonsillectomy:

Tonsillectomy is a surgery that is performed to remove tonsils that are a source of chronic or recurring infections or contributing to sleep apnea. When performed for sleep apnea, the procedure is known as a Uvulopalatopharyngoplasty (UPPP) and also involves trimming the uvula and placing dissolving sutures.

Before your surgery:

- **If you are on blood thinners talk to your prescribing provider for instructions on when to stop before surgery and when to restart after surgery**
Avoid any medications or supplements that can thin the blood such as aspirin, ibuprofen, fish oil, and ginkgo biloba the week before surgery.
- **You may not eat or drink anything, including water after midnight on the day of surgery. However, you may take medications with a sip of water the day of surgery.**

After your surgery:

- **Pain is to be expected and reaches a peak in the first 2-3 days after surgery.**
You may be prescribed a prescription pain medication. Otherwise you can take Tylenol alternating with Motrin every six hours per package directions. We can also prescribe numbing lollypops through a local compounding pharmacy.
- **Expect to take at least 7-10 days off of school or work. Avoid any exercise for two weeks.**
After the first week you may gradually resume regular activity.
- **It is normal to experience ear and jaw discomfort and bad breath after surgery.**
Do not be alarmed if you experience these symptoms. It is also common to see a white coating where the tonsils used to be – this is not an infection and is part of normal healing.
- **Eat a soft diet for the first 10 – 14 days after surgery.**
This will limit discomfort and reduce the risk of bleeding
- **Expect a small amount of blood tinged saliva.**
This can be managed by rinsing with ice cold water until resolved.
- **If any heavy or profuse bleeding please go to the emergency room for evaluation**
Even under ideal circumstances, 1 – 4% of patients will have some degree of bleeding after surgery, with 1% requiring another trip to the operating room to treat bleeding.