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POST-OP INSTRUCTIONS FOLLOWING TONSILLECTOMY SURGERY

WHAT TO EXPECT:

PAIN: after tonsillectomy surgery is to be expected. Associated with this pain is difficulty swallowing. The pain is variable but can be quite severe for at least the first week and it's common for pain to be worse on approximately Day 5. This is the peak inflammatory healing period after tonsil surgery. Referred ear pain is also very common after tonsil surgery.

IMPORTANT: *If your pain becomes excessive and is not responding to the above analgesic recommendations or you develop excessive vomiting and are unable to keep fluids down then it is often best to attend the nearest major hospital emergency department for assessment, rehydration and analgesia.*

BLEEDING: It is quite common to have intermittent blood-stained mucous after tonsillectomy surgery. Any persistent fresh bleeding which doesn't stop can be a problem and if this occurs then you should make your way to the nearest major hospital emergency department.

FLYING: It is recommended that you do not fly for at least 4 weeks after surgery to minimise the risk of having a post-operative nose bleed while on an aircraft.

NAUSEA AND VOMITING: Nausea and vomiting may occur, particularly if you are taking Endone tablets. The anaesthetist will provide you with a script for Zofran wafers. Zofran wafers are very effective for alleviating nausea and vomiting. You can obtain these wafers from any pharmacy if needed.

TIREDFNESS AND FATIGUE: are very common in the first week after any form of surgery. Dr Bova recommends at least one week off work.

DIET: There are no major dietary restrictions after tonsillectomy. Soft, cold foods are often preferable. It is best to avoid very spicy and acidic foods as these tend to irritate the back of the throat. It is critical that you prevent dehydration and hence maintaining your oral intake of fluid is extremely important.

EXCERCISE: It is best to avoid strenuous physical activity such as exercise for at least 2-3 weeks after surgery. Going about your normal daily activities is fine.

POST OP APPOINTMENT: It is important to book a post-operative visit with Dr Bova approximately 1-2 weeks after surgery.

IN AN EMERGENCY: *If you have any concerns after surgery you can contact Dr Bova in his office on 83826090.*

AFTER HOURS: *You can contact Dr Bova or his ENT registrar at St Vincent's Public Hospital on 8382 1111*

MEDICATIONS:

You will be instructed on the medications/pain relief to take after surgery.

These will normally include the following:

- ❖ Regular Panadol: 2 tablets (1g) 4-6 hourly. Taking 2 in the morning, 2 at lunch, 2 at dinner and 2 prior to going to bed is ideal.
- ❖ Regular Celebrex (an anti-inflammatory medication) for 3-5 days. Take with food as directed.
- ❖ Oxycodone (same as Endone): These are powerful analgesics and you can take 1-2 tablets every 4-6 hours as needed (1 tablet is 5mgs). Maximum of 8 tablets per day. These tablets do cause constipation in addition to nausea and drowsiness. A bowel softener such as Coloxyl can be used if constipation is an issue. Endone is only available on prescription. You may be discharged with a supply of Endone or alternatively a script will be provided by the anaesthetist and/ or Dr Bova may also provide you with a script. Please dispose of any surplus Endone when no longer needed.
- ❖ Gargles can also be helpful to remove slough which can sometimes reduce discomfort. Salt water gargles or medicated gargles such as Difflam can be used every 3-4 hours.
- ❖ Chewing gum often helps prevent jaw stiffening and alleviates pain and is worth trying.