Tonsillectomy

A tonsillectomy, or removal of the palatine tonsils, is indicated in patients who experience an infection of the tonsils three or more times per year, or when inflammation of the tonsils causes airway obstruction. Patients should be monitored closely for bleeding during the first 24 hours after surgery; frequent swallowing after surgery may be a sign of bleeding in the throat. Patients may experience minor bleeding five to seven days after surgery when tissue sloughs from the surgical site. If there is noticeable or persistent bleeding, the patient should seek medical attention immediately. Patients should avoid coughing, clearing their throat, and blowing their nose during the immediate postoperative period, as these activities may cause bleeding. The use of straws should also be avoided. To ease throat discomfort after surgery, patients may gargle with warm saline or eat ice chips. Soft foods can be introduced one to two days after surgery, as tolerated.



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Indications

Recurrent Tonsillitis
Recurrent-clock with Tassels-on-fire
A tonsillectomy, or removal of the palatine tonsils, is indicated in patients who experience an infection of the tonsils three or more times per year or when inflammation of the tonsils causes airway obstruction.

Considerations

Saline Gargles
Saline-sail Gargling
Gargling with warm saline may lessen a patient’s discomfort after surgery. Vigorous gargling should be avoided, as it could increase the risk of bleeding.

Ice Chips
Ice Chips
Patients may eat ice chips after surgery to decrease throat discomfort. Fluids should be limited until the patient is completely awake, and there are no signs of bleeding.

Monitor for Bleeding
Monitor with Bleeding
Patients should be monitored for bleeding or hemorrhage after undergoing removal of the tonsils. Frequent swallowing after surgery may be a sign of bleeding in the throat.

Within 24 Hours
Within 24 hr clock
Patients should be monitored closely for bleeding during the first 24 hours after surgery. If there is noticeable bleeding the in the patient’s throat, the patient should seek medical attention immediately.

After 5-7 days
(5) Hand to Lucky (7) with Day-calendar
Patients may notice bloody mucus or saliva five to seven days after surgery, as tissue sloughs from the surgical site, which can cause minor bleeding.

Soft Foods
Soft-serve Sorbet
Soft foods such as jello and soup should be encouraged. Dairy products such as ice cream and pudding are not recommended. Dairy products may leave a film in the throat, causing the patient to clear their throat, which could lead to bleeding.

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Do Not Cough, Clear Throat, or Blow Nose

No Coughing Coffee-pot, Clearing throat, or Blowing Nose

Patients should avoid coughing, clearing their throat, and blowing their nose during the immediate postoperative period. These activities may cause trauma to the surgical site, which could cause bleeding.

Do Not Use Straws

No Straws

The use of straws should be avoided after a tonsillectomy, as they can increase a patient’s risk of bleeding at the surgical site.

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