



Greenville Ear, Nose & Throat

Post-op Care for Thyroglossal Duct Cyst Removal

Here are common questions parents and/or patients have after this surgery. The information below will answer most of these concerns. Rest assured, however, that we will be happy to talk with you or see your child if the issue is not resolved.

How long does it take to recover?

It takes most children 7-10 days to recover from surgery to remove a neck mass. Some children feel better in just a few days, while some may take up to 14 days to recover.

What can my child drink after surgery?

The most important part of recovery is to drink lots of fluids. Some children avoid drinking because of pain. Offer and encourage lots of fluids or soft foods such as juice, soft drinks, Popsicles, Jell-O, pudding, yogurt and ice cream. However, avoid milk products (such as pudding, yogurt and ice cream) for the first 24 hours.

When drinking, children sometimes have a small amount of liquid come out of their nose—this usually stops within a few weeks.

Some children have nausea and vomiting from the anesthesia—this occasionally occurs during the first 24 hours after surgery and usually stops on its own. Please call our office if you are worried that your child is not drinking enough or has signs of dehydration (such as peeing less than 2-3 times a day or crying but having no tears).

What can my child eat?

Your child can eat anything after surgery. In fact, the sooner eating and chewing are resumed, the quicker the recovery.

Many children avoid eating, though, because of pain. As long as drinking is good, do not worry about eating. Many children are not interested in eating for up to 1 week. Some lose weight, which is gained back when normal eating resumes.

Will my child have a fever?

A low-grade fever is normal for several days after surgery. Please call our office if the temperature exceeds 102°F.

What can my child do?

Most children rest at home for several days. Activity can increase as the child desires. Generally, children can return to school when they are eating and drinking normally, off pain medication and sleeping through the night—usually 7-10 days.

For your child's safety, please do not leave the Greenville area for 2 weeks after surgery.

What about wound care?

A small drain usually is placed at the time of surgery and removed later that day or the next morning. The area should be kept clean and dry for 2-3 days. Thereafter, it can be gently washed with warm soapy water and patted dry.

Mild swelling in the area is normal. However, major swelling is unusual. If this occurs, call our office right away.

Will my child be in pain?

Most children have a fair amount of throat pain after surgery. Many also complain of earaches. That's because the same nerve that goes to the throat also goes to the ears.

Some children have jaw and neck pain, which is from the positioning of the head in the operating room.

Many children have trouble eating, drinking and sleeping because of pain. The severity may fluctuate from mild to very severe and may last up to 14 days.

What can control the pain?

For the first few days, give acetaminophen and ibuprofen. Then, reduce as needed, alternating up to every three hours with the following dosing schedule:

For mild pain:

Give acetaminophen every 4-6 hours as needed. You can alternate it with ibuprofen every 6 hours as needed.

Another option is to switch off acetaminophen and ibuprofen every 3 hours.

For breakthrough pain (pain not controlled by the drugs previously mentioned):

Older children can receive a stronger pain medication, such as hydrocodone. Alternate it with acetaminophen every 4-6 hours as needed. However, do not use hydrocodone/acetaminophen while your child is sleeping.

Another option is to switch off hydrocodone and ibuprofen every 3 hours.

Do not use Lortab to prevent pain or give it to a sleepy child.

When is the follow-up visit?

A visit to your child's surgeon is needed 1 week after surgery. If problems arise before that time, please call our practice.

Please call our office if you have questions about this information: (864) 454-4368.