



## Secondary Palatoplasty and Pharyngeal Flap Post Operative Instructions

*The following is a general list of answers to questions most frequently asked. These comments are not intended to cover every aspect of your post-operative care, since each patient may differ in the course of healing and is individualized for each patient. If you have any questions regarding your post-op care, please call our office Monday - Thursday, 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. and Fridays, 8:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. Urgent or emergency calls will be answered after business hours by phoning (972) 331-1900 or (800) 344-4068.*

### POST OP:

1. Elevating your child's head after surgery is very important. Your child will have some swelling of the back of the throat, which can make swallowing uncomfortable. To help the swelling go down quickly, make sure your child sleeps propped up with 2 or 3 pillows. Keep the head above the level of the heart at all times. Encourage your child to be active. Lots of walking will also make the swelling disappear more quickly.
2. Encourage your child to drink. Your child's throat will feel better much sooner if lots of fluids are taken. Fluids are easier to drink if they are served at body temperature, but some children prefer colder liquids.
3. Give your child clear fluids, such as strained broth or apple juice, the day of surgery. Be careful about giving them with acidic juices. After your child is tolerating clear liquids you may transition them to liquids or pureed foods including milk products. All foods need to be runny enough to pour from a cup. There should be no pieces that could catch on the stitches. Do not let your child eat hard foods, like raw vegetables or crackers, for at least 3 to 4 weeks after the operation. All liquids must be
4. The stitches in your child's mouth are absorbable and will disappear in 2-4 weeks as the incision heals. Do not let your child put anything, including straws and fingers in the mouth during this time. The mouth must be kept very clean or an infection could set in. The best way to keep your child's mouth clean is with a WaterPik, but do not aim the WaterPik directly on the suture line. Your child needs to use a WaterPik at least 5-6 times a day and after every feeding. Use saline (salt water) or mouthwash to rinse the mouth. **Good oral hygiene is very important.**
5. Your child will be on antibiotics for five days after you leave the hospital. Please take the medication as directed until it is finished. It is very important that you take the medicine to prevent infection.



6. Your child's first appointment in the office will be 2 weeks after surgery. At this time the surgeon will check your progress and give you any other instructions that are necessary. Please make an appointment at your pre-op visit.

**Safety Tips:**

- Keep your child from placing objects (i.e., straws, hands, popsicle sticks, toys, tooth brushes, spoons/forks, etc.) in the mouth.
- Your surgeon may order saline nose spray to be used to keep nasal passages open.

**Please contact our office immediately:**

- If your child has a bad odor coming from the mouth, difficulty breathing, bright red bleeding from the mouth, pain that is unrelieved from the pain medication, or runs a fever over 101 degrees F (taken under the arm) for more than 24 hours.