

Post-operative Instructions for Throat or Vocal Cord Area Surgery

Rest: Plan to rest the evening after your operation. Even after minor surgery, you may feel drowsy or tired for a number of hours. You may also have fatigue, muscle aches and a sore throat for 1-2 days.

Nausea and Vomiting: It is common to have 2-3 episodes of nausea and vomiting. If it persists through the night, call the office in the morning.

Temperature: Generally, the body temperature does not raise much above 100 degrees following surgery. A slight rise is to be expected. It is normal to have a low-grade fever for up to a week after surgery. Report any persistent temperature above 101.5 degrees one hour after Tylenol or pain medication is given.

Discomfort and Pain: Contact the office if there is severe discomfort or pain that severely limits breathing or swallowing.

Bleeding: Occasional blood tinged mucous may be noted. This is normal. Call the office for persistent bleeding > 30 ml, or one ounce.

Constipation: PATIENTS MAY EXPERIENCE CONSTIPATION WHILE TAKING NARCOTICS AND EATING A LOW FIBER DIET. PLEASE TRY TO MINIMIZE NARCOTICS. TRY TO EAT SOME SOFT FOODS WITH FIBER: E.G. APPLE SAUCE, BANANAS and BERRIES. ONE CAN BLEND SOME FRUITS WITH ICE FOR A COOL "SMOOTHIE" DRINK.

Fluids and Diet: Drink cool liquids throughout the day after your surgery. You may want to use gum or hard candy to moisten the mouth and encourage swallowing. You may resume your regular diet gradually and as tolerated.

Activities: You can expect to resume normal activities or exercise after one week, or as recommended by your physician.

Voice Rest: Rest your voice, limiting to ten words or less a day for 4 days, and minimal talking for 7-10 days. Advise friends and family in advance that you will be unable to talk, and carry a notepad. No yelling, whispering, or throat clearing until you see your physician at the postoperative visit.

Smoking: All tissue needs oxygen to heal. Any smoke exposure limits oxygen delivery to one's tissue. Please do not smoke or be exposed to secondhand smoke for a month after surgery.

Other Instructions:

- Cool compresses to the neck and face may be soothing.
- Elevate the head of your bed 30-40 degrees.
- Use a vaporizer in the bedroom and near your chair if you are sitting during the day. Be sure to clean the vaporizer daily.
- Refrain from smoking and exposure to secondhand smoke.
- You may experience hoarseness for approximately two to four weeks or longer.
- Report problems of swallowing, difficulty breathing, or worsening hoarseness that occur after 24 hours.

If you have any questions or concerns, please call us at (503) 581-1567.