

Family Education Sheet

Home Care Instructions after an Adenoidectomy



Boston Children's Hospital

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There are many ways to make your child more comfortable after surgery. This packet will help you care for your child at home.

Contact us

- **Monday–Friday, 8 am–4:30 pm:** Call the ORL Nursing line at (617) 355-7147.
- **Nights and weekends:** Call the hospital's page operator at (617) 355-6369 and ask to page the ORL resident on call.
- **During the first night after the surgery,** call Boston Children's Post-Anesthesia Care Unit (PACU) at (617) 355-7735. This line is answered 24-hours-a-day by a nurse.

When should I call the doctor?

Call us if your child has:

- An upset stomach or vomiting (throwing up) that lasts 3 hours or more
- Bleeding from nose and/or mouth
- A fever higher than 101.5°F/38.6°C
- Not had any liquids to drink for 6-8 hours
- More sleepiness than usual
- Neck stiffness or inability to move head (up-and-down or side-to-side) that doesn't get better with pain medicine or keeps your child from normal daily activities

Please call us with any questions or concerns.

Can my child be active?

Your child can return to school, daycare, gym and sports once they stop taking pain medication. This is usually 2-5 days after surgery.

Please follow the specific recommendations from your child's doctor.

Will my child be in pain?

Some children don't have much pain. Others have pain for several days. This is normal.

- It's normal to have pain in the back of the throat after surgery. This can make it hard to swallow.

- Your child might have a stiff neck and/or neck discomfort. They may have a hard time moving their head. Pain medicine and warm packs should help with this.
- **Pain medicine won't get rid of all the pain.**
- Your child will take **acetaminophen** (like Tylenol®) and **ibuprofen** (Advil® or Motrin®) for pain. Dosing is specific for your child's surgery, and may be different from the dose you're used to. Please see the next page for instructions.

Can my child eat as usual?

Your child can go back to eating a normal diet when you go home.

Will my child have a fever?

A fever of up to 101.5°F/38.6°C is normal for 2-3 days after surgery.

- **If your child feels warm,** check their temperature. Ask your nurse to show you how to do this if you aren't sure how.
- **If your child has a fever higher than 101.5°F/38.6°C,** call the ORL Nursing Line or your child's surgeon at Boston Children's.
- If your child won't take acetaminophen by mouth, give a rectal suppository of acetaminophen. You can buy this at a drugstore. Follow the directions on the box.
- **Always talk with your doctor about allergies your child may have before giving over-the-counter medication.**

How should I care for my child's mouth and throat?

Bad breath is normal and can last for weeks.

- Don't give your child mouth rinses (like Scope or Listerine®). They may bother the back of their throat.
- Brush your child's teeth as usual.
- It may be uncomfortable when your child clears their throat, cries and coughs. Try to comfort your child when this happens.

This Family Education Sheet is available in [Arabic](#) and [Spanish](#).



What are acetaminophen and ibuprofen?

Acetaminophen (Tylenol) and ibuprofen (Advil or Motrin) are medicines that **treat pain** and **fevers**. Ibuprofen also helps with inflammation (swelling and redness).

- Acetaminophen comes as a tablet, capsule or liquid.
- Ibuprofen comes as a tablet, capsule or in 2 strengths of liquid.

Where do I get them?

You can buy acetaminophen and ibuprofen in a drugstore. You don't need a prescription.

How do I give my child these medicines?

- You need to alternate doses of acetaminophen and ibuprofen every 3 hours.

Important: This means that **your child gets acetaminophen every 6 hours and ibuprofen every 6 hours.**

- For the first 3 days after surgery, give these doses regularly. This includes throughout the night.
- After 3 days, you can give the doses as needed. Some children need the medicine regularly for more than 3 days.

It can be hard to remember the last time you gave your child acetaminophen or ibuprofen. We suggest using a medicine schedule and tracker like this.

Example of a medicine tracker:

Give dose of...	Time	1.	When given
Acetaminophen	12 a.m.		
Ibuprofen	3 a.m.		
Acetaminophen	6 a.m.		
Ibuprofen	9 a.m.		
Acetaminophen	12 p.m.		
Ibuprofen	3 p.m.		
Acetaminophen	6 p.m.		
Ibuprofen	9 p.m.		

How much medicine should I give my child?

Use the dosage tables on the next 2 pages:

1. Find your child's weight.
2. Match the weight with the type of medicine you are giving (in the top row).

A mL is a measurement of liquid. This is the amount you fill a syringe with if you use a liquid formula.

Important notes

- It's important to **use the measuring device that comes with the bottle**. You can also use a 5 or 10 mL syringe. Don't use kitchen utensils or measuring spoons. *They won't give the right dose.*
- If the medicines upset your child's stomach, give the medicines with food or milk.
- **If you think you gave your child too much medicine**, call the American Association of Poison Control Center right away at 1 (800) 222-1222.
- Dosing is specific for your child's surgery, and may be different from the dose you are used to. Please see the instructions on the next page for dosing information.

For young adults

- If you drink alcohol, talk with your doctor or nurse before taking acetaminophen and ibuprofen.
- If you're pregnant or breastfeeding, talk with your doctor or nurse before taking acetaminophen and ibuprofen.

When should I call the doctor?

Call us if your child has:

- Pain that does not get better after taking the medicines
- A rash
- Yellow skin or eyes
- A feeling of faintness or is dizzy
- Blood in the stool (poop) or black stools
- Stomach pain that doesn't get better on its own

How to use dosage tables

- Find your child’s weight on the left.
- Match the weight with the type of medicine you’re using (in the top row).
- An mL is a measurement of liquid. This is the amount you use to fill up the syringe.

Dosage Table: Acetaminophen (Tylenol, Anacin-3, FEVERALL and Paracetamol)

	Syrup	Chewable	Chewable	Adult	Adult
Medicine strength	160 mg/5 mL	80 mg tablets	160 mg tablets	325 mg tablets	500 mg tablets
Weight in pounds (lbs)					
Less than 6 lbs	Talk with your doctor or nurse.				
6-11 lbs	1.25 mL (40 mg)				
12-17 lbs	2.5 mL (80 mg)	1 tablet (80 mg)			
18-23 lbs	3.75 mL (120 mg)				
24-35 lbs	5 mL (160 mg)	2 tablets (160 mg)	1 tablet (160 mg)		
36-47 lbs	7.5 mL (240 mg)	3 tablets (240 mg)			
48-59 lbs	10 mL (320 mg)	4 tablets (320 mg)	2 tablets (320 mg)	1 tablet (325 mg)	
60-71 lbs	12.5 mL (400 mg)			1 tablet (325 mg)	
72-95 lbs	15 mL (480 mg)		3 tablets (480 mg)	1 tablet (325 mg)	1 tablet (500 mg)
More than 95 lbs	Follow package directions				

Dosage Table: Ibuprofen (Advil and Motrin)

	Children's Suspension (Children's Advil, Children's Motrin)	Infant Drops (Infants' Advil, Infants' Motrin)	Chewable Tabs (Junior Strength Motrin or Advil)	Tabs/Caplets (Advil, Motrin)
Medicine strength	20 mg/mL	40 mg/mL	100 mg	200 mg
Weight in pounds (lbs)				
Less than 6 lbs	Talk with your doctor or nurse.			
6-11 lbs	Talk with your doctor or nurse.			
12 – 15 lbs	1.5 mL (30mg)	0.75 mL (30mg)		
15 – 20 lbs	2 mL (40mg)	1 mL (40mg)		
20 – 24 lbs	2.5 mL (50mg)	1.25 mL (50mg)		
24 - 30 lbs	3 mL (60mg)	1.5 mL (60mg)		
30 – 37 lbs	3.75 mL (75mg)	1.87 mL (75mg)		
38 - 50 lbs	5 mL (100mg)	2.5 mL (100mg)	1 tab (100mg)	½ tab (100mg)
50 – 58 lbs	6.25 mL (125mg)			
58 – 75 lbs	7.5 mL (150mg)		1.5 tabs (150mg)	
75 – 99 lbs	10 mL (200mg)		2 tabs (200mg)	1 tab (200mg)
99 - 121 lbs	12.5 mL (250mg)		2.5 tabs (250mg)	
121 – 143 lbs	15 mL (300mg)		3 tabs (300mg)	1.5 tabs (300mg)
143 – 165 lbs	17.5 mL (350mg)			
165 – 176 lbs	20 mL (400mg)			2 tabs (400mg)