

Caring for a Child After Neck Surgery

This handout will tell you how to care for your child at home after neck surgery.

What to Expect After Surgery

Your child may have nausea from the anesthesia.

Your child will have a small neck incision. There may be a drain in the neck for 1-2 days. If there is, your child will be kept overnight in the hospital.

Incision Care

Keep the neck area dry for 48 hours. After 48 hours, just lightly pat the skin to clean. Do not scrub.

Diet

Start with clear liquids and slowly move to solid foods. If your child still has nausea, start over with clear liquids and slowly advance.

Pain

Give acetaminophen (Tylenol®) and ibuprofen for pain relief or fever as needed.

Activity

No sports, swimming, or heavy exercise or lifting for the next 14 days.

Follow Up

A follow up visit will be scheduled in about 1-2 weeks after surgery.

When to Call

- Signs of infection:
 - redness
 - swelling
 - soreness
 - warmth
 - pus-like drainage
- Fever over 102° F
- Nausea or vomiting
- Pain not controlled by pain medicine
- Trouble breathing or swallowing

Who to Call

Pediatric Otolaryngology (ENT) Clinic
Weekdays, 8:30 am to 4:30 pm
(608) 263-6420, option 3

After hours and weekends, this number will give you the paging operator. Ask for the Otolaryngology (ENT) doctor on call. Give your name and phone number with the area code. The doctor will call you back.

The toll-free number is **1-800-323-8942**.

If you are a patient receiving care at UnityPoint – Meriter, Swedish American or a health system outside of UW Health, please use the phone numbers provided in your discharge instructions for any questions or concerns.

Your health care team may have given you this information as part of your care. If so, please use it and call if you have any questions. If this information was not given to you as part of your care, please check with your doctor. This is not medical advice. This is not to be used for diagnosis or treatment of any medical condition. Because each person's health needs are different, you should talk with your doctor or others on your health care team when using this information. If you have an emergency, please call 911. Copyright © 1/2021 University of Wisconsin Hospitals and Clinics Authority. All rights reserved. Produced by the Department of Nursing. HF#5671