

Post tonsillectomy pain and/or nausea & vomiting

Updated May 2018

Assess hydration & resuscitate

Consider admission if <3 years old or dehydration or re-presentation

Encourage normal diet throughout recovery

Pain lasts 10-14 days and is often worse 5-7 days post op

Antibiotics do not reduce pain. It is normal for the tonsillar fossa to look white/sloughy for 21 days post op. Low grade fever up to 38 degrees is common for 2-4 days post op.

Mainly pain

Check compliance with post tonsillectomy analgesia protocol

Adult:

celecoxib 4mg/kg/dose (up to 200mg) 12 hourly

paracetamol 15mg/kg/dose, 4-6 hourly, maximum 60mg/kg/ day

oxycodone immediate release 0.05-0.1mg/kg/dose 4-6 hourly PRN

Child:

celecoxib liquid 10mg/ml, 4mg/kg/dose, 12 hourly (from SWHC pharmacy, volume equivalent to 20 doses in childproof bottle)

paracetamol 15mg/kg/dose, maximum 60mg/kg/day or 4 doses

oxycodone (Oxynorm) liquid 1mg/ml, 0.05-0.1mg/kg/dose 4-6 hourly PRN, (from SWHC or SJOG pharmacy, volume equivalent to 20 doses dispensed in childproof bottle)

Mainly nausea and vomiting

ondansetron ODT or wafer 0.1mg/kg/dose 8 hourly

and/or

Adults:

withdraw or halve dose of oxycodone or change to tramadol

Children:

withdraw or halve dose of oxycodone

Taking less than prescribed: encourage compliance, increase dose and frequency of oxycodone IR

Taking maximum doses prescribed at discharge without N&V or sedation, try one or all of:

Increase dose of oxycodone IR

or substitute tramadol for oxycodone

or prednisolone 0.5-1.0mg/kg/day, 1-3 days

See GP, surgeon or ED in 24-48 hours if not improving

Persistent N&V after ceasing opiate and using ondansetron, consider prednisolone 0.5-1.0mg/kg/day, 1-3 days

See GP, surgeon or ED in 24-48 hours if not improving

Re-assess hydration & resuscitate

Consider admission if <5 years old or dehydration or re-presentation

Encourage normal diet throughout recovery