

## **Hospital Post-op Instructions**

### **After the appointment:**

♥ Your child will be drowsy and will need to be monitored very closely for several hours following his appointment. Even though you have been discharged, your child is not fully recovered for several hours, and therefore must be directly supervised by a responsible adult. Keep your child away from areas of potential harm.

- Please observe your child on the way home. The child should be watched closely for nausea or breathing difficulty and carefully secured in a car seat or seat belt.
- Keep your child under close observation (let him rest in the same room in which you are present). The best place for your child is on the couch or a flat, comfortable surface *near you*. If your child wants to sleep, place them on their side with their chin up. Wake your child every hour and encourage them to have something to drink in order to prevent dehydration. At first it is best to give your child sips of clear liquids (water, gatorade, clear fruit juices) to prevent nausea. Wait 15 – 20 minutes; if no nausea, he may advance to soft, bland foods. The first meal should be light and easily digestible. Do not be concerned if your child is not hungry; as long as he is drinking, you need not worry.
- An upset stomach with some nausea may occur, and occasionally there may be an episode of vomiting. If your child vomits, help them bend over and turn their head to the side to insure that they do not inhale the vomit. Continue to give clear liquids and the nausea should subside. If vomiting persists after four hours, please call us.
- Do not allow your child to begin activities involving physical coordination or skill (climbing stairs, playing outside, etc.) since his reactions are definitely slowed and he could injure himself. He needs to take it easy for the rest of the day. Tomorrow he may resume normal activities.
- When his mouth wakes up, your child may have some discomfort and soreness of the gums, mouth and jaws. Most dental procedures do not cause much post-operative pain. Many children will describe the discomfort as a "hurt". This is normal and is because of tissue manipulation, holding the mouth open, etc. Don't hesitate to give your child acetaminophen (Tylenol) or Ibuprofen (Motrin, Advil) in the appropriate dose, today and/or tonight. In some cases, your child may have already received pain medication by IV. If so, do not give anything for 4 hours.
- Brushing and flossing are necessary every day, and are especially important for the next few days. The teeth and gums must be kept very clean for proper healing to occur. These areas build up plaque and food debris every day, and must be cleaned. It will be normal for the gums to be sore and bleed a little when cleaning for the next few days as they are healing. During this time, you should help your child clean his teeth and gums. Parents sometimes think they are brushing too much or too vigorously because it bleeds a little or seems to hurt. This is normal, and any bleeding or pain will go away in a few days with good cleaning. If cleaning is inadequate, however, the gums will not heal but will become inflamed. Then they will be swollen and red and hurt worse than ever! Even so, good cleaning will heal inflammation. Put up with a little discomfort now and keep the mouth clean so that the gums will be healthy.
- If your child has an elevated temperature the next morning, has prolonged vomiting, has difficulty breathing, or has any other special problem, *do not hesitate to call*.
- Prior to leaving the hospital/outpatient center, you will be given a detailed list of "Post-Op Instructions" and an emergency contact number if needed.

### **Emergencies:**

Emergencies after discharge from general anesthesia are rare. The most common emergencies usually result from physical injury due to inadequate supervision. If you feel your child is experiencing an emergency, take him/her directly to the emergency room. Do not wait to contact us. Please do contact us, however, after you have ensured your child's immediate safety.