

Postoperative Instructions For Uvulopalatopharyngoplasty

(These are general instructions only. If your doctor gave you specific instructions, please follow those orders.)

Definition: A uvulopalatopharyngoplasty is a procedure that tightens the soft palate and removes the uvula. If tonsils are present, they will be removed. If tonsillectomy was done prior to this procedure, the procedure is somewhat shortened. While the patient is asleep, the uvula is grasped and pulled back upon itself. A wrinkle line is identified and the mucous membrane from the wrinkle line inferiorly is removed. The uvula is also removed and the margins of the incision are then sewn together with a dissolvable suture called Monocryl. This suture dissolves anywhere from 1 to 3 weeks and by the third week most, if not all, of the sutures should have dissolved.

Length of Procedure: A uvulopalatopharyngoplasty usually takes 45 minutes.

Recover: Patients are placed in the recovery room for approximately one hour after the surgical procedure. They are then kept overnight and monitored to make sure that there is no airway collapse and will be released the following morning if everything goes as expected.

Anesthetic Used: All patients are given a general anesthesia. A local anesthesia is injected into the soft palatal area to maintain excellent control of the pain postoperatively.

Postoperative Instructions: We highly recommend that no aspirin or nonsteroid anti-inflammatory medications such as Motrin or Naprosyn be administered. These drugs interfere with platelet function and “thin the blood”. If your surgical procedure is scheduled for the morning, we recommend nothing by mouth from midnight of the night prior to surgery. This also includes any liquids and this is strictly enforced.

Postoperative Expectations: Obviously sore throat and painful swallowing is to be expected. Time off from work runs anywhere from 7 to 14 days, on average most patients do well with 7 days off work. We do keep all patients overnight, monitor their airway and make sure that there is no obstructive phenomenon postoperatively that would need our assistance.

Postoperative Instructions For Uvulopalatopharyngoplasty – (continued)

If by the morning you are doing well and the pain is under good control, we will release you the following morning which is what we usually expect. No crunchy foods are to be consumed for two weeks after this surgical procedure. Postoperative instructions will be given to you at the hospital and will be more specific than this informational handout.