

MODIFIED UPPP, UVULOPALATOPHARYNGOPLASTY SURGERY

A modified

Uvulopalatopharyngoplasty is performed on patients who have been diagnosed with obstructive sleep apnea (OSA).

This operation is performed through the mouth and involves the removal of the tonsils if they are still present, uvula “dangly bit” and portions of the soft palate.

The aim of this surgery is to open the airway to either eliminate the need for CPAP, increase tolerance for CPAP or to reduce and cure snoring.

What to Expect

Pain

You will have a very sore throat after the operation. The pain usually lasts about two to three weeks. It usually peaks around the tenth day but can last up to sixteen days. Pain is considerably more on swallowing. Ear pain is also common after this procedure.

Pain Management

You will be given some painkillers to take home, but you should ensure that you have a supply at home of Paracetamol and if your doctor allows Ibuprofen (Neurofen).

You will be given both painkillers and antibiotics to take when you leave the hospital, please take these as instructed by your doctor.

You should follow the pain relief instructions even if you're not feeling pain once at home. From your first day at home you can take pain relief as required.

Eating and Drinking

Although your throat is sore, it is very important that you eat normally after the operation as this helps your throat to heal. You will be given painkillers to make your throat more comfortable and make it easier for you to eat.

It is recommended to drink three litres of fluids each day to help with recovery. Fluids can include water, sports drinks, yoghurts, custards, soups, milkshakes.

Because the palate has been shortened, there is risk that when you swallow liquids after the operation some liquid will go into the nose. This does not happen to everyone and if it does happen, it usually stops within a few weeks

You may brush your teeth and use diluted mouthwash as necessary, although it may burn.

Bleeding

A small amount of bleeding post operatively is common from the throat and nose. It often occurs between 7 – 10 days post operatively and many people notice a small amount of blood or spit up which would be less than 1ml. This may be due to infection or dehydration and is less likely if you eat normally after the operation and drink lots of fluids.

If you cough up fresh blood of at least a tablespoon or more any time after the operation, you should present immediately to the nearest hospital. Only very occasionally is it necessary to have a second operation to stop the bleeding.

Precautions

You should make arrangements for someone to collect you as you should not drive or travel unaccompanied after a general anaesthetic.

Do not perform any heavy lifting (more than 10 kilograms) or vigorous physical activity (including sport) for three weeks after surgery.

Going Home

You can expect to stay in hospital for between 1 - 3 nights after your operation. This will depend on how you feel and whether the pain is settling and you are eating normally.

You will need to rest at home after your operation and should arrange to take a minimum of two weeks off work. After three weeks the throat should have healed and you can return to a normal life.

We will see you in the Clinic about four weeks after the operation but please contact us if you have any questions or would like to be seen sooner.