



## Postoperative Care

### Frenuloplasty

Ankyloglossia (“tongue-tie”) is a condition present from birth in which movement of the tongue tip is restricted due to an unusually short and/or thick frenulum. A frenulum is a band of tissue that anchors the tongue to the floor of the mouth. When the frenulum is too short or tight, the tongue tip is unable to move freely. This may result in difficulty with early bottle or breast-feeding or later speech articulation.

A frenuloplasty is a procedure done to correct a tongue and prevent reformation of the tongue tie. In children over the age of 3 months a frenuloplasty is performed in the operating room under general anesthesia. The entire procedure usually is complete within 10 minutes. In children with speech articulation problems secondary to their tongue tie speech therapy is necessary to ensure improved mobility of the tongue for improved speech articulation. General risks from frenuloplasty include bleeding, pain, scarring, and infection.

#### What can I expect after a frenuloplasty?

- Your child may have some bloody saliva on the day of surgery.
- **Eating & Drinking:** The most important requirement for recovery is for your child to drink plenty of fluids. Juice, “flat” soft drinks, popsicles, Jell-O, and Gatorade are excellent sources of liquid. Any of the child’s favorites may be offered, however certain citrus fruits may cause pain. Popsicles are a particularly good way to numb the area under the tongue and they provide hydration. Generally, **there are no food restrictions after surgery**. The sooner the child eats and chews, the quicker the recovery. **Any food that the child will eat is allowed.**
- **Fevers are common after surgery**. Your child may run a fever for several days after surgery. If the fever remains over 102 **and** is not improving 30-45 minutes after ibuprofen (Motrin), hydrocodone with acetaminophen (Hycet - pain medication), or acetaminophen (Tylenol) is given please call the office. It is important that children drink plenty of fluids after surgery. This will not only make them feel better, but will reduce the chance of fevers.
- Following the procedure it is normal to see a dissolvable stitch or an area under the tongue that may be yellow, white, brown, or gray. This is a part of the normal healing process.
- It is normal to have an increase in drooling the first few days following the procedure. This will resolve on its own.
- Toddlers and older children who undergo frenuloplasty for speech articulation issues must be enrolled in speech therapy and can resume sessions in 1-2 weeks.

#### What should I do if my child has pain?

- Some pain is expected following this procedure; however, the degree of pain typically varies widely with age. Younger children typically have far less pain than older children.
- We recommend the consistent use of ibuprofen (Motrin) every 6 hours for the first 5 days in children over the age of 6 months.
- A narcotic pain medication is often prescribed for older children. If your doctor prescribes pain medication, please be aware that most pain medications also contain acetaminophen (Tylenol). You should not give pain medication and Tylenol to your child in the same 4-hour period. ***Never wake your child up to give a narcotic pain medication; such as, hydrocodone.***
- Do not use aspirin products as these can increase the chance of bleeding after surgery.

#### When can my child begin normal activity?

- Your child may resume normal activity immediately following surgery, including normal feeding schedule (bottle, breast, or solid food) and activities.
- Younger children often return to daycare or preschool the next day. Older children may be out of school for 3-5 days depending upon the level of pain.

**When should I call the doctor?**

- If your child has excessive bleeding.
- If our child is showing signs of dehydration (dark colored urine, not wetting diaper, crying without tears).

**How can I reach the doctor after hours?**

- There is a doctor on call 24 hours. If you need to reach us, please call the office number:

**972-745-8400 or 817-337-3339**