

BRP Post-Op Instructions

Barbed Reposition Pharyngoplasty — Your complete guide to recovery after palate surgery

The Procedure

Barbed Reposition Pharyngoplasty (BRP) is a reconstructive surgical procedure performed to treat obstructive sleep apnea (OSA) by stabilizing and enlarging the airway at the level of the palate. The procedure uses specialized barbed sutures to reposition and support throat tissues. This approach offers improved long-term stability compared to older techniques like uvulopalatopharyngoplasty (UPPP).

What to Expect After Surgery

Pain and Discomfort

- Pain is typically moderate to severe and lasts 10–14 days.
- Throat discomfort is most noticeable during swallowing and may be accompanied by tightness or pulling sensations.
- Over-the-counter and prescription medications will be provided to help manage discomfort.
- It is common to have residual pain for up to a month with sneezing, yawning, or coughing.

Swelling

- Swelling in the throat is common and will improve gradually over two weeks.
- You may notice mild swelling extending to the neck or surrounding tissues.

Dietary Adjustments

- A soft diet is recommended for two weeks. Examples include soups, yogurt, mashed potatoes, pudding, scrambled eggs, and smoothies.
- Avoid foods that are spicy, acidic, crunchy, or hard.
- Stay hydrated with water or non-acidic beverages to aid healing.

Activity Restrictions

- Avoid strenuous activities, heavy lifting, or vigorous exercise for at least two weeks.
- Light activity such as walking is encouraged as tolerated.
- Speak gently and avoid activities that require excessive vocal strain.

Oral Hygiene

- Use warm salt water rinses (1 teaspoon of salt in 8 ounces of water) after meals and before bed.
- Avoid mouthwashes containing alcohol, as they can irritate the throat.

Medications for Pain Management

Acetaminophen and Ibuprofen

- These medications should be taken alternately every 3 hours.
- Example schedule:
 - **6:00 AM:** Acetaminophen 1000 mg
 - **9:00 AM:** Ibuprofen 600 mg
 - **12:00 PM:** Acetaminophen 1000 mg
 - **3:00 PM:** Ibuprofen 600 mg

Prescribed Pain Medication

- A limited supply of narcotic medication will be provided if needed for severe pain. Use sparingly and as directed.

Other Medications

- Anti-nausea medication may be provided if necessary.
- If you experience excessive throat dryness or discomfort, discuss the use of throat lozenges or sprays with your doctor.

When to Call Your Surgeon — Contact Your Surgeon Immediately If You Experience:

Fever of 100.4°F (38°C) or higher; inability to drink fluids causing dehydration (dark urine, rapid heart beat and/or dizziness upon standing); significant bleeding from the throat; persistent or worsening pain despite medication; or signs of infection, such as increased redness, swelling, or foul discharge.

Follow-Up Care

First Week Post-Surgery

- Your surgeon will assess your healing progress and address any concerns during your follow-up visit.

6–8 Weeks Post-Surgery

- A follow-up sleep study may be scheduled to evaluate the procedure's effectiveness and any remaining symptoms.

Long-Term Monitoring

- Periodic visits may be necessary to ensure long-term success and address any ongoing symptoms.

Common Complications and Their Management

Moderate to Severe Pain

- Pain typically resolves within 10–14 days. Ensure you follow the medication schedule provided for optimal relief.

Swelling

- Manage swelling by sleeping with your head elevated on an extra pillow.

Thread Extrusion

- Rarely, a small portion of the barbed suture may become exposed. If this occurs, contact your doctor for evaluation.

Difficulty Swallowing

- Dysphagia is common initially and improves over two weeks. Stick to a soft diet during this time.

Recovery Tips

- Avoid smoking and alcohol consumption during recovery, as they can delay healing.
- Use a humidifier in your bedroom to keep the air moist and soothe your throat.
- Follow all postoperative instructions carefully to ensure optimal healing and results.

These instructions are intended as a general guide. Always follow the specific instructions provided by your surgeon. If you have questions or concerns at any time, please contact your surgeon's office.

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