



ALASKA FACIAL PLASTIC SURGERY & ENT  
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## Post-Operative Care: Following Cleft Palate Repair

For the first three weeks after your child's surgery, the cleft palate repair is not strong enough to resist damage that could be caused by foreign objects (or fingers!).

In order to prevent injury, promote healing, and maintain your child's comfort, it is important that you follow these guidelines for the **first three weeks** after surgery.

### FEEDING INSTRUCTIONS:

- Feed your child carefully using a cup or the side of a spoon to drop fluids and food into the mouth. **DO NOT** allow the spoon to touch the roof of the mouth. **DO NOT** allow your child to chew on anything. **Remember, no bottles or pacifiers!**
- After each feeding, give your child water to drink, to rinse the surgical area and to keep it clean.
- **DO NOT** give any hot food or hot fluids.
- **Please note:** *Your doctor or speech pathologist will meet with you after surgery to talk about feeding plans.* Since each child is different, the plan will be specific to your child. However, the following guidelines may be helpful:

### FIRST WEEK

Full liquid diet including:

- Milk
- Formula
- Juices
- Well-melted ice cream
- Slightly warm broth

You may dissolve gelatin in any of the liquids, but do not feed it in solid form.

### DO NOT GIVE FOODS THAT NEED TO BE CHEWED.

### SECOND WEEK

Soft diet that consists of foods "that melt in the mouth", such as:

- Ice cream
- Sherbets
- Frozen yogurts
- Puddings
- Custards
- Smooth yogurts

- Soft cereals
- Gelatins
- Pureed baby foods

### **THIRD WEEK**

Usual foods that your child would normally eat.

### **ACTIVITY GUIDELINES**

Any object your child puts in his/her mouth (including little fingers) could ruin the repair. Therefore, your child must wear arm restraints (“splints”) for the first ten days after surgery. These must not be removed unless of an emergency or with physician contact.

### **RELIEF OF PAIN**

You can expect your child to have mild to moderate pain for a few days. Give liquid acetaminophen (Tylenol) as directed on the package. If a stronger medicine is needed, give as prescribed.

### **PROBLEMS TO REPORT TO YOUR DOCTOR RIGHT AWAY**

- A fever (temperature over 100.4F)
- Severe pain not relieved by the recommended pain medicines
- Vomiting and/or diarrhea
- Bleeding from and/or a change in the suture line (area of surgery)
- Any direct injury to the repaired palate
- Drainage from the suture line that looks like pus or smells bad

If you have questions or concerns following your surgery please call our office at **907-671-6017** (after hours, ask for ENT doctor on call) or call **911** for emergency.