Tonsillectomy recovery: advice

Original independent practice. Allow 45 minutes: 5 minutes for reading and 40 minutes for writing. Assume that today's date is 5 November 2026. Cahal Cousins is going home with his mother today. You are a registered nurse on the surgical ward. Using the case notes, write a letter to Ms Nicola Gillen, Cahal Cousins's mother and agreed carer, explaining his home care. Address her questions about whether worsening pain requires an ambulance and whether she can keep him at home if bleeding stops. Address the letter to Ms Nicola Gillen, 24 Cedar Road, NSW 2000, Australia. In your answer: expand the relevant notes into complete sentences; do not use note form; use letter format. The body of the letter should be approximately 180–200 words.

Choose one box per line: I = Include / C = Compress / O = Omit. Answers and reasons are on the webpage (scan QR).

	I	C	O
Patient details			
1. Name: Cahal Cousins	☐	☐	☐
2. DOB: 12/03/2017 (9 yrs)	☐	☐	☐
3. Mother: Ms Nicola Gillen; agreed home carer	☐	☐	☐
4. Home: 24 Cedar Road, NSW 2000, Australia	☐	☐	☐
Social background			
5. Mother taking leave; available at home throughout initial recovery	☐	☐	☐
6. Enjoys astronomy books and drawing planets	☐	☐	☐
7. Mother complained that receptionist was rude during admission	☐	☐	☐
Medical history			
8. Recurrent tonsillitis over 2 yrs → elective surgery	☐	☐	☐
9. Allergies: nil known; no regular medicines before admission	☐	☐	☐
10. Wrist fracture 2022; healed, no ongoing problems	☐	☐	☐
Treatment/Progress			
11. 04/11/26: tonsillectomy; uncomplicated procedure	☐	☐	☐
12. Postoperative nausea yesterday; resolved before breakfast today	☐	☐	☐
13. Inpatient continuous SpO2 monitoring overnight; discontinued following review	☐	☐	☐
14. Hourly airway observations on ward; ceased before discharge	☐	☐	☐
15. 05/11: alert; breathing comfortably on room air	☐	☐	☐
16. No fresh bleeding seen overnight or this morning	☐	☐	☐
17. Drinking freely; breakfast tolerated; passed urine	☐	☐	☐
Treatment/Progress			
18. Throat discomfort improved after oral paracetamol	☐	☐	☐
19. Paracetamol supplied; mother demonstrated correct label-based dosing	☐	☐	☐
20. Mother asks: worsening pain alone → ambulance? Visible bleeding stops → safe to stay home?	☐	☐	☐
Plan — documented treating-team instructions for Cahal			
21. Team instruction: supplied paracetamol as labelled; no additional paracetamol-containing products; no codeine	☐	☐	☐
22. Team: pain uncontrolled by supplied medicine → GP review same day; do not increase dose	☐	☐	☐
23. Team: unable to drink at all → urgent nearest ED assessment	☐	☐	☐
24. Team: fresh blood from mouth/nose, bloody vomit or repeated swallowing → nearest ED immediately, even if bleeding stops	☐	☐	☐
25. Team: heavy bleeding or breathing difficulty → call 000 for ambulance	☐	☐	☐
26. Team: encourage frequent fluids; chilled drinks may soothe throat	☐	☐	☐
27. Team: check for bleeding/breathing difficulty at least twice tonight; second postoperative night	☐	☐	☐
28. Team: throat/ear pain may temporarily worsen without bleeding; quiet activities for distraction	☐	☐	☐
29. Team: fever → prompt medical review	☐	☐	☐
30. Discharge approved today; mother requests brief written instructions to refer to at home	☐	☐	☐