

Tonsillectomy (child)

ENT07 Lite - Expires end of January 2024



This fact sheet is for general information about this procedure only. It is not intended to be used as medical advice or to replace advice that your relevant healthcare professional would give you. If you have a particular medical problem, please consult a healthcare professional.

© EIDO Systems International Limited. The operation and treatment information in this document is published under license from EIDO Systems International and is protected by copyright laws. Other than for your personal, non-commercial use, you may not copy, print out, download or otherwise reproduce any of the information.

eidohealthcare.com



What is a tonsillectomy?

A tonsillectomy is an operation to remove the tonsils. The tonsils are part of a group of lymphoid tissues (like the glands in your neck) that help to fight off infection from germs that are breathed in or swallowed.

Tonsillitis happens if the tonsils become infected. This causes pain, fever, difficulty swallowing or sleeping, and can make your child feel unwell.

Are there any alternatives to surgery?

Surgery is recommended as it is the only dependable way to stop tonsillitis that keeps on coming back.

In children, a long course of antibiotics may break a cycle of frequent infections or the tonsillitis may simply stop after a few years.

What does the operation involve?

The operation is performed under a general anaesthetic and usually takes about 30 minutes.

Your surgeon will perform the tonsillectomy through your child's mouth using one of the following techniques.

- Cold dissection technique – Your surgeon will use a steel instrument to peel or cut the tonsil away from the layer of muscle underneath it
- Diathermy technique – Your surgeon will use a special instrument that uses heat to stop the bleeding
- Coblation technique – Your surgeon will use an instrument that uses radiofrequency energy to dissolve the tonsil

What can I do to prepare my child for the operation?

Your child should try to maintain a healthy weight. They will have a higher risk of developing complications if they are overweight. If your child is having surgery to improve their breathing during sleep, it is less likely to be successful.

What complications can happen?

General complications of any operation

- Bleeding
- Infection of the surgical site (wound)
- Allergic reaction to the equipment, materials or medication

Specific complications of this operation

- Small pieces of the tonsil may be left behind
- Lingual tonsillitis

Consequences of this procedure

- Pain

How soon will my child recover?

They should be able to go home the same day or the day after.

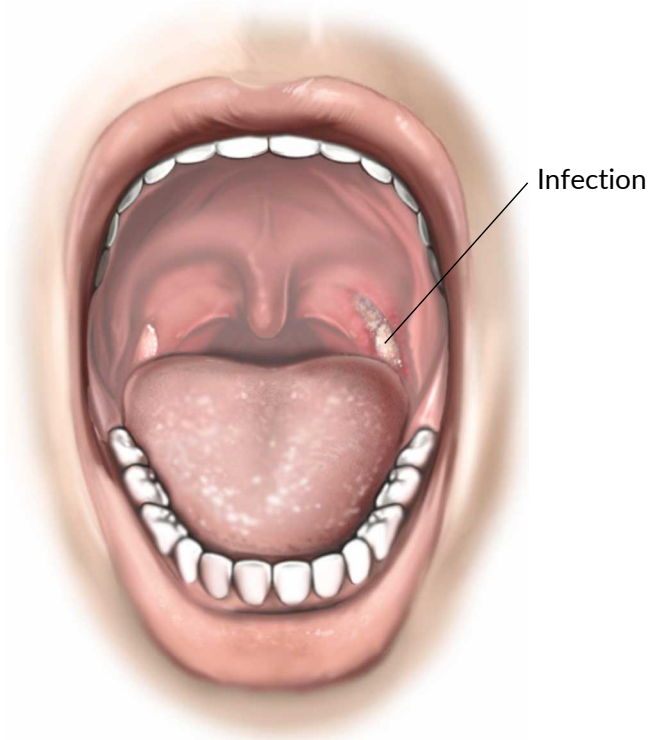
The pain can last for up to 2 weeks. It usually gets gradually worse over the first 4 to 5 days before beginning to improve, and tends to be worse first thing in the morning.

Your child will need to stay off school and away from groups of people for 2 weeks. This is to help prevent throat infections while your child's throat is still healing.

Most children make a full recovery and return to normal activities.

Summary

Surgery is the only dependable way to stop tonsillitis that keeps on coming back and the resulting pain, fever and difficulty swallowing.



Tonsillitis

Keep this information document. Use it to help you if you need to talk to the healthcare team.

Some information, such as risk and complication statistics, is taken from global studies and/or databases. Please ask your surgeon or doctor for more information about the risks that are specific to you, and they may be able to tell you about any other suitable treatments options.

This document is intended for information purposes only and should not replace advice that your relevant healthcare team would give you.

Acknowledgements

Reviewer

Matthew Campbell (MBBS, FRACS)

Illustrator

Medical Illustration Copyright © Nucleus Medical Art. All rights reserved. www.nucleusinc.com