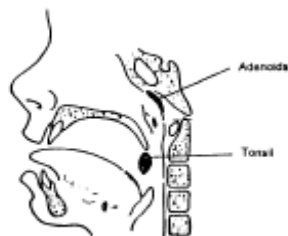


Helping Your Child When Tonsils/Adenoids Are Removed

The **tonsils and adenoids** are small masses of spongy tissue.

The **tonsils** are in the back of the throat on both sides of the tongue.

The **adenoids** are at the back of the nose where the passages of the nose and throat meet.



Call the ENT Clinic Nurse if your child has cold or flu symptoms, or a throat infection up to 2 weeks before surgery. This can increase the risk of bleeding following the operation. The ENT Doctor will assess your child and decide whether to:

- Go ahead with the surgery;
- Delay it to another time; or
- Plan to go ahead with the surgery but after the surgery have your child stay in the hospital overnight.

Does my child have to have his or her tonsils out?

We might recommend taking your child's tonsils out if your child is getting a lot of sore throats which are causing him or her to lose time from school.

Another reason children have their tonsils removed is because they are too large and block their breathing at night.

What happens during the surgery?

Your child is given medication so they are asleep for the operation. This is called a general anesthetic or a general. The operation usually takes about 30 to 45 minutes.

Before the surgery

Tonsils and adenoids are removed either on a day care or admit day of surgery basis. Talk to your child's Otolaryngologist (ENT - Ear, Nose & Throat Doctor) to know how long your child will stay.

Your child will need to be off school for almost 2 weeks to allow for proper rest and recuperation.

Be prepared that your child might need medical attention after his or her surgery. Find out if you can easily get from your home to the nearest Emergency Department within 45 minutes. If you cannot, we recommend that you plan to stay with your child in the Lower Mainland for 14 days following surgery. Talk to the BC Family Residence Program for help with accommodation at 1-866-496-6946.

Information to help you and your child get ready:



Get the booklet *Your Child's Surgery or Procedure* from your ENT doctor's office or the Anesthetic Care Unit (ACU).



Take the virtual tour at:
<https://youtu.be/705OCiewqVY>

This tour gives you information about:

- Getting ready for the surgery the weeks and day before.
- What happens the day of surgery?
- Where your child will go?

Things I can buy so I can care for my child at home:

- Have 2 types of pain medications. These are called:
 1. Acetaminophen (e.g. Tylenol®) and
 2. Ibuprofen (e.g. Advil®).
- Choose a flavor and type of medication such as liquid, chewable or pills that your child will like to take. If choosing liquid medicines, choose ones that are not colored red because it can be confused with blood after surgery.
- **Please bring these medications in with you at the time of your child's surgery so the nurse can go over the appropriate dose for your child after surgery.**
- Some soft foods like jello, yoghurt, custard, soup, or puddings.
- Cold juices such as apple juice. Do not offer your child juices such as orange, tomato or strawberry juice. These juices will sting your child's throat. They have natural acids in them.
- Popsicles, freezies, ice cream and ingredients for smoothies.
- Chewing gum or gummy bears or both if your child is old enough so it is safe for her or him to have these.

After the surgery what to expect:

Sick to stomach

Your child may feel sick to her or his stomach. This is common for a few hours after this surgery.

It is very important to restart your child's drinking and eating as usual.

- If your child vomits, give nothing to eat or drink for about an hour, then try sips of water or a popsicle.
- Give small amounts of fluids frequently such as 1 teaspoon every 10 minutes to start with.

Bad breath

Your child may have bad smelling breath and mouth for about 10 days after the surgery.

- DO NOT use mouthwash or gargle.

Stuffed up nose

Your child may feel 'stuffed up'. After the adenoids are removed, the nose plugs up with mucus. The body makes mucus to help the wound heal. It may seem as if your child has a cold.

- Wipe the mucus gently. Don't blow hard. The mucus may have a pinkish color. This is normal.

Sore throat

Your child's throat will hurt especially when swallowing. It will hurt for 1 to 2 weeks but will take up to 2 to 3 weeks for your child's sore throat to heal completely.

- It is important to give your child pain medicine regularly even if he or she does not seem to be in a lot of pain. The pain medicine will help your child start eating and drinking normally.

Caring for and giving pain medication to your child.

Your child's weight today is: _____ kg.

Days 1 and 2 after surgery (dates):

- Follow each bottle's instructions and give both medications (acetaminophen and ibuprofen) regularly.
- Please ensure your child receives pain medication routinely overnight to ensure continued comfort, especially for the first 2 days after surgery.

Days 3 to 5 after surgery (dates):

- Continue to follow the bottle's instructions and give acetaminophen regularly for up to 5 days after tonsillectomy.
Give this dose every 4 hours while your child is awake only as needed to control the pain.
- Give ibuprofen as needed while awake according to the bottle's instructions.
- Do not wake your child to give pain medications on these dates.

Days 5 to 8 after surgery (dates):

What to expect:

- Your child may be in more discomfort when the sores in the back of the throat may be coming off. He or she will need more regular acetaminophen during these dates. This is the highest risk time of bleeding, but bleeding can occur as late as 17 days after surgery.
- Your child may also feel this as head or neck pain and some children can have an earache for up to 3 weeks after the surgery. These pains are called "referred" pain because the pain is from the throat but your child feels it in their ears, head &/or neck. Give pain medication to help relieve the pain and encourage your child to talk, eat and drink regularly. Doing this for

the first weeks after surgery helps relieve the muscle tightening or spasms which cause some of the soreness. Offer gum or gummy bears if your child is old enough. Chewing helps to ease the pain by making spit or saliva that soothes the throat as it's swallowed.

- Your child's temperature may go up a little. He or she may be grumpy and seem sicker. This gets better in a day or so.
- Care for your child as you normally do when they are sick.
- Follow the bottle's instruction and give acetaminophen and ibuprofen as needed to control the pain.

What else do I need to know to safely give these medications to my child for this time after a Tonsillectomy?

- Follow the bottle's instructions for your child.
- DO NOT give any additional medications that have acetaminophen in them such as:
 - Cough or cold medicine
 - "Tylenol 1s", "Tylenol 2's", or "Tylenol 3's".
- If you are not sure if you can give another medication to your child please check with your child's ENT Doctor or your pharmacist.

What can I feed my child?

Your child will eat much less for a week or so after the surgery. He or she may even lose some weight. Once the throat heals, your child will go back to his or her normal eating patterns.

- Offer cold fluids that are soothing to the throat such as popsicles, freezies, ice cream, yoghurts, smoothies, puddings and juices.
- Avoid any red colored fluid as the red color can look like blood in the mouth or vomit.
- Avoid straws for at least a week as the sucking action may cause bleeding.

- When ready to eat more solid foods, start with soft foods.

When can my child return to his or her usual activities?

- Most children need to be home with plenty of rest for the 1st week.
- If your child feels well enough, he or she can play quietly as long as it's not rough and tumble play.
- If your child feels well enough they can return to school after the 1st week but should remain inside for recess and lunch time.
- Avoid sports, tiring activities, and rough play for 2 weeks. No swimming for 2 weeks.

Stay Cool

The back of the throat has many blood vessels. If the body gets very hot, these widen and the wound may bleed.

- For the 1st week it is best to avoid anything which makes your child hot, including the hot sun.
- Your child should have lukewarm baths or showers for 2 weeks.
- DO NOT allow your child to go in a hot tub for 2 weeks.



Call your child's Family Doctor or the ENT Clinic Nurse at 604-875-2345 ext. 7053 or toll free in BC @ 1-800-300-3088 ext. 7053 if:

- Your child's temperature goes above 38 degrees Centigrade or 100 degrees Fahrenheit for more than 3 days.
- Your child vomits for more than 24 hours after surgery.

- Your child looks like they're swallowing and you haven't given your child anything to eat or drink. Take your child to your nearest emergency department. They may be bleeding.
- Your child pees less than 2 times a day. Your child's urine should be pale yellow, NOT dark yellow or brown. Small amounts of dark urine are an indication that your child is not drinking enough liquids.
- Your child is having a lot of pain not relieved by medicine
- Your child's breath is very unpleasant. Your child may have an infection that should be treated with antibiotics.
- You are worried about your child.



Call 911 or go to your nearest emergency department if:

- Your child spits or vomits any blood.

If there is a significant amount of bleeding, call 911 and have your child lay on his or her side so that the blood does not collect at the back of the throat.



Follow up appointments.

Your child's ENT Doctor will usually want to see him or her after surgery.

- Make an appointment for your child to see your Family Doctor within 2 weeks.
- Make an appointment to see your child's ENT Doctor within 6 to 12 weeks. Please call the office at 604-875-2113 or toll free in BC 1-888-300-3088 ext. 2113