



# Tonsillectomy

with or without adenoidectomy

## Ear, Nose & Throat Clinic

4480 Oak Street, Vancouver, BC V6H 3V4  
604-875-2113 1-888-300-3088  
[www.bcchildrens.ca](http://www.bcchildrens.ca)

## What to expect after surgery

### Accommodations

- After surgery, your child should stay one night in the lower mainland.
- For 10-14 days after surgery, your child must stay where an ENT doctor could help your child within 45 minutes.
- If you need accommodations, call the BC Family Residency Program at 1-866-496-6946.

### Pain

- Pain is expected after your child has their tonsils removed. Pain can last for up to 2 weeks. It is usually worst in the first 7-10 days.
- Your child might complain of throat pain, ear pain, and neck pain.
- It is important to ask your child every 4 hours if they have pain, since they may not tell you.
- To help with pain, you can give your child Tylenol (Acetaminophen) and Advil (Ibuprofen). For the first few days, it is best to give your child both Tylenol and Advil every 4-6 hours regularly, during the day and night. After, you can give these medications as needed. Follow the directions on the bottle.
- Between days 5 and 9, your child's pain may get worse. This is normal,

because the scabs are peeling off where the tonsils were.

- Distraction and play can also help with your child's pain.

### Diet

- It is most important that your child is drinking lots of fluids. Offer fluids frequently throughout the day. Drinking more fluids will help with your child's pain.
- You can also offer your child foods like ice cream, popsicles, smoothies, yogurts, or Jello. All of these may help with pain. Avoid acidic juices like orange, and anything red since it looks like blood.
- If your child is ready to eat more foods, offer their normal diet, but avoid any foods too hot, spicy, scratchy, or acidic.

### Activity

- For the first 1-2 weeks after surgery, your child must stay home from school. They will need lots of rest. Check with your child's doctor about when your child can return to school.
- Your child should avoid sports and swimming for 2 weeks.
- Ask your child's doctor if there are other restrictions.

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## Other things to expect

- Your child may have a stuffed nose for up to 2 weeks after surgery. You can gently wipe mucous, but your child must not blow their nose for at least 2 weeks.
- Your child may have bad breath after surgery. This usually lasts about a week. It gets better if your child drinks a lot of fluid.
- Your child's voice may sound different after surgery. Their voice will go back to normal after a few weeks.
- You may see white scabs at the back of the throat. This is normal while the throat is healing.



## Follow up

- Your child should return to the clinic for a follow-up visit 6-12 weeks after their surgery.
- After your child's surgery, call your doctor's office to schedule this visit



## Go to the Emergency Room If...

- Your child spits or vomits any blood.

**If there is a significant amount of bleeding, call 911.** Have your child lay on their side, so that the blood does not collect at the back of the throat.



## Call the ENT Clinic Nurse or Seek Medical Attention if:

- Your child has a fever of 38.5°C or higher that lasts for more than 24 hours, starting 2 or more days after surgery
- Your child's pain does not get better with pain medicine.
- Your child's bad breath gets worse.
- Your child vomits more than 24 hours after their surgery.
- Your child is not peeing more than 2 times a day.
- You have other worries about your child.



## Contact information

- ENT office:  
604-875-2113
- ENT clinic nurse:  
604-875-2345 ext. 7053  
Monday to Fridays, except holidays  
8:30am-4:30pm