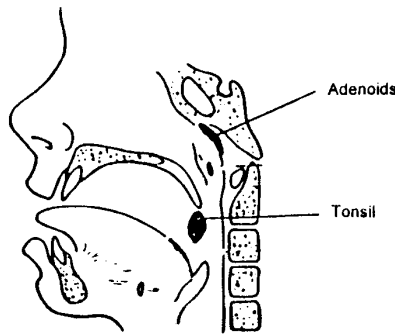


About a tonsillectomy and/or adenoidectomy:

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.



Important! Before your child's operation...

Please do not give...

...any medicines containing **aspirin** or **ibuprofen** to your child for at least 21 days before the surgery. Some examples of these are Advil™, Motrin™, Nurprin™, and Pepto Bismol™. These medicines affect the blood's ability to clot, which may put your child at greater risk for bleeding following the operation. If your child needs medicine for pain or fever, use acetaminophen (Tylenol™). Consult your doctor if this is not effective.

Please call the ENT Clinic Nurse if...

... your child has cold, flu, or tonsillitis within 2 weeks of surgery. This can increase the risk of bleeding following the operation. The ENT surgeon will assess your child and decide to:

- go ahead with the surgery;
- reschedule; or
- monitor your child in hospital overnight after the surgery.

Getting Ready:

Tonsils and adenoids are removed either on a **daycare** or **admit day of surgery** basis. Please make sure that you have the following booklet called, "*Your Child's Surgery or Procedure*", from your doctor's office or the Day Care Unit. It will help you prepare.

There is also a videotape called, "*All About Your Operation*", available in the Family Resource Library, call 604-875-2345, local 5102. This video tells you how you can help your child and it tells your child what to expect. It will help to make you both more comfortable.

Have these at home:

- Tylenol™ or Tempra™ (Acetaminophen) – choose a flavour your child will accept,
- some soft foods like jello, yoghurt, custard, soup, puddings,
- cold juices (not citrus nor tomato),
- popsicles/ice cream,
- chewing gum/gummy candy.

What to expect afterwards:

It is common for children to feel sick to their stomach for a few hours after an anesthetic. If your child vomits, give nothing to eat or drink for about an hour, then try sips of water or a popsicle.

It takes 2 – 3 weeks for the throat to heal completely. Your child's throat will hurt for about a week especially when swallowing. About 7 days after surgery, sometimes sooner, the scabs – white patches on the throat, will begin to come off. Your child may feel this as head or neck pain. Some children have earaches for up to 3 weeks after the operation. These pains are called "referred pain". The pain is from the throat, but your child may feel it in the ear, neck or head.

After tonsils are removed, the risk of bleeding is highest 7 to 10 days after surgery, but bleeding can occur as late as 17 days after surgery. If your child spits or vomits any blood, please seek immediate medical attention and go to your closest Emergency Department. If there is a significant amount of bleeding, call 911 and have your child lay on his/her side so that the blood does not collect at the back of the throat.

After 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 colour. This is normal.

Between the 5th – 8th day after surgery, your child's temperature may go up a little. S/he may be irritable and seem sicker. This gets better in a day or so. Care for your child as you usually do when s/he is sick.

Most children have bad smelling breath and mouth for about 10 days after the surgery. It helps to brush the teeth and rinse the mouth a few times a day - **do not gargle**. You may have to help because your child will find it hard to open his/her mouth and do a careful brush. If your child's breath is unbearable, it may be an infection. You will need to consult your child's doctor as your child may need treatment with antibiotics.

Home Care:

On the first night at home:

We suggest that you check on your child:

- before you go to sleep
- a few times during the night

What to do about pain:

Chewing helps control the pain. The chewing makes saliva that soothes the throat as it is swallowed. Give your child something to chew on. Offer gum (no aspergum) or gummy bears if your child is old enough.

Encourage your child to talk and swallow. This relieves the muscle spasm (tightening) which causes some of the soreness.

Give Acetaminophen (Tylenol™ or Tempra™) as often as you think necessary to relieve pain, usually about every 4 hours is enough. If you give it an hour before meals it will make eating easier. **Don't** use a medication containing Aspirin (Acetylsalicylic Acid) or Ibuprofen. Make sure to check labels on the medicine container. These medicines may cause bleeding. For the first few nights, wake your child in the middle of the night and give him or her the pain medication.

Call the ENT clinic if your child is having a lot of pain not relieved by medicine.

What to feed your child:

Your child may eat much less for a week or so after the surgery. S/he may even lose weight. Once the throat heals, children go back to their normal eating patterns. Here are some suggestions:

- ice chips or popsicles are soothing to the throat,
- encourage many small drinks throughout the day,
- choose jello, juices and popsicles that are not red. The red colour can look like blood in the mouth or vomit. You want to be able to see blood if it is really there.
- your child can eat or drink anything s/he feels like. Citrus acidic food like oranges and tomatoes, or spices may sting the throat.

No straws for at least a week. The sucking action may cause bleeding.

What can your child do:

Most children need to be at home with plenty of rest for the **first week**.

If your child feels well enough, s/he can play as long as it is not rough and tumble play.

If your child feels well enough, s/he can return to school before the week is up, but should remain inside for lunch and recess time.

Not allowed: sports, tiring activities and rough play for 2 weeks, swimming for 3 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 first week it is best to avoid hot baths, long periods in the hot sun and anything which may make the child too hot.

- No hot tubs for 1 month
- Lukewarm shower/bath is OK

Access the emergency (911) system, or go directly to the nearest emergency if your child has blood coming from the mouth or nose.

Call your family doctor or the E.N.T. Clinic Nurse at 604-875-2345, local 7053, if:

1. Your child's temperature is above normal for more than 3 days or goes above 100° – 102° Fahrenheit (37.8° – 38.8° Celsius).
2. Your child vomits for more than 24 hours after the surgery.
3. Your child pees less than twice a day.
4. You are worried about your child.

Follow-up:

Your doctors will usually want to see your child after surgery. Please phone his/her office for an appointment.

See your family doctor within 2 weeks.

See the E.N.T. doctor within 6-12 weeks.

Please bring this pamphlet with you to the hospital.

Developed by the health care professionals of the ENT Department with assistance from the Department of Learning and Development

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Helping your child when Tonsils/ Adenoids are removed



An agency of the Provincial Health Services Authority

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