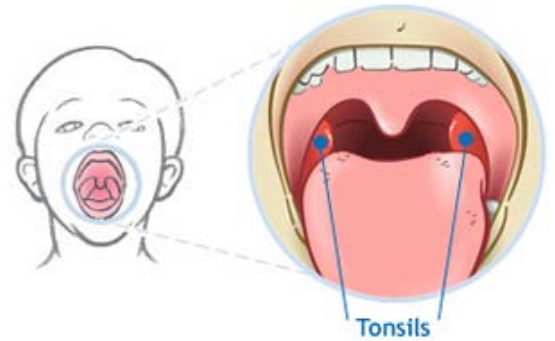


### **What is a Tonsillectomy and Adenoidectomy?**

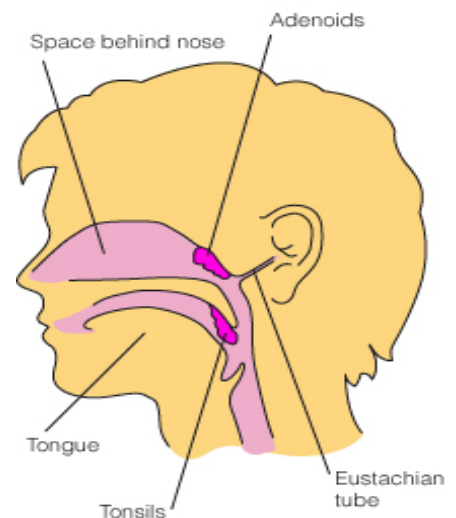
Tonsillectomy is the surgical procedure for removal of the tonsils. Adenoidectomy is the surgical procedure for removal of the adenoids.



### **What are the tonsils?**

There are several types of tonsils. The palatine tonsils are removed in a tonsillectomy. Palatine tonsils are collections of lymph tissue on the right and left side of the upper throat (also called the oropharynx). Tonsils are largest in 3-6 year olds and smallest in teen and adult years.

Tonsils are part of body's immune system. Studies show removing the tonsils does not affect the body's ability to fight infection.



### **What are the Adenoids?**

The adenoids are located behind the nose. Enlarged adenoids can block nasal breathing and contribute to middle ear fluid, ear and sinus infections.

### **Why are tonsils and adenoids removed?**

- Upper airway obstruction/snoring/Sleep apnea: Tonsils and adenoids can causing snoring, blocked breathing during sleep, and obstructive sleep apnea.
- Tonsil infections: Frequent tonsil infections, usually 6-7 in one year or 2-3 per year for more than a few years.
- Enlargement of one tonsil: To obtain a tissue specimen or biopsy

### **What are the risks of Tonsillectomy and Adenoidectomy?**

Complications are very rare. When considering surgery it is important to weigh risks and benefits of the surgery. The following complications have been reported in the medical literature: Bleeding, delayed bleeding up to 10-14 days after surgery. Some children may be hospitalized for observation if there is any bleeding. In rare situations bleeding can be severe and may require additional surgery or even more rarely require a blood transfusion. Other risks included: infection, dehydration, prolonged pain, permanent change in voice, nasal regurgitation of food, dental injury, or tongue numbness. In some patients, snoring, sleep apnea, or pharyngeal infection may not improve. Because adenoids are not completely removed the adenoid tissue may occasionally grow back.

### **Will my child spend the night in the hospital?**

Most children will go home the same day as the surgery once fully recovered from the anesthesia unless they have other medical conditions or severe sleep apnea, or are younger than 3 years of age.

### **Will my child have pain after surgery?**

**Yes: Tonsillectomy is a painful procedure.** Throat, ear, and neck pain are common complaints. Pain may increase for 7 days after surgery, and then improve for the next 7 to 14 days. Pain medications like Acetaminophen (Tylenol), Tylenol with codeine, or other medications ease the pain. Narcotic pain medications may cause nausea or stomach pains, so use plain Tylenol (acetaminophen) should this occur. Liquid or dissolvable medications are easier to swallow than pills. Do not use ibuprofen (Advil, Motrin), naprosyn (Aleve), or aspirin **unless otherwise** advised by the physician.

### **What happens after surgery?**

**Recovery typically takes 10 days; some children require two weeks for a full recovery.** **Encourage your child to drink!!** Drink plenty of fluids: juice, soft drinks, popsicles, milk shakes, ice cream, and Jell-O. Drink small amounts frequently. Make a game with fun rewards to encourage drinking. Soft foods like mashed potatoes, applesauce, macaroni and cheese, oatmeal, and pudding are better tolerated. Weight loss is expected after surgery, weight is regained when the child is eating normally.

### **How active can my child be after surgery?**

Most children may return to school 7 to 14 days after surgery if eating and drinking well, pain-free, and sleeping well. Avoiding gym/sports is recommended for 7-14 days.

### **What are common complaints after surgery?**

- **Fever:** A low-grade fever may be observed several days after surgery.
- **Nasal congestion or drainage:** There may be increased drainage from the nose after surgery.
- **Breathing:** Snoring and mouth breathing may worsen for 10-14 days after surgery
- **Voice changes:** Speech may sound high-pitched or "nasal", improving over 2 to 6 weeks after surgery.
- **Bad breath:** This odor is from the scab in the throat where the tonsils and adenoids were removed. This scab is white in color and not a sign of infection, and improves within 7 to 10 days.

### When should I call the doctor?

- **Bleeding:** Any bleeding from the mouth should be reported. For severe bleeding, go to the nearest emergency room.
- **Dehydration:** If there has been no fluid taken for 24 hours. Signs of dehydration include lethargy, and reduced or very concentrated urine output.
- **High Fever:** Temperatures greater than 102<sup>0</sup>

Please call us for questions or concerns. During business hours:

Stacey Ishman, M.D. 410-502-3225, Sandra Lin, M.D. 410-614-6243, Emily Boss, M.D. 410-955-9772, Margaret Skinner, M.D. 410-502-6625, David Tunkel, M.D. 410-955-1559, Melinda DeSell, C.R.N.P. 410-502-6188.

**For emergencies: 410-955-6070, ask for the Pediatric Otolaryngology physician (Peds ENT) on-call.**

### Websites

<http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/tutorials/tonsillectomyadenoidectomy/htm/index.htm>

<http://www.tonsil.org/>

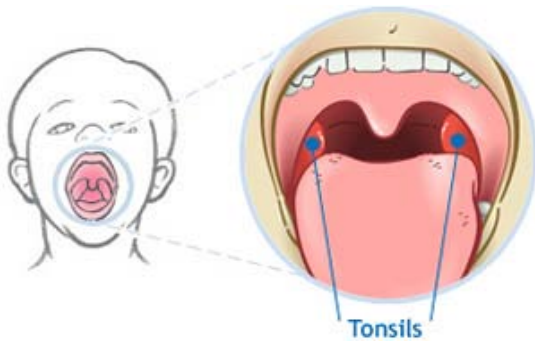
### Spanish websites

<http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/spanish/tutorials/tonsillectomyadenoidectomyspanish/htm/index.htm>

<http://www.entnet.org/healthinfo/espanol/tonsils.cfm>

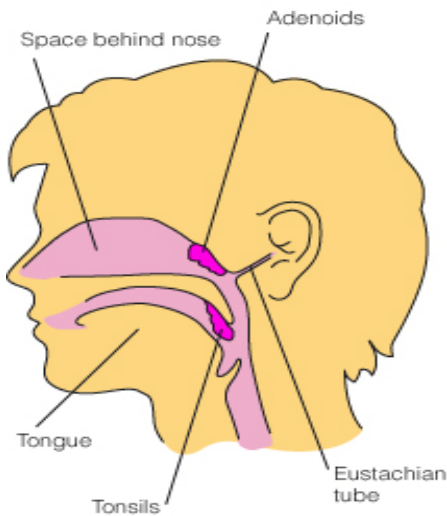
Picture from: [www.consumerreports.org/.../what-is-it.htm](http://www.consumerreports.org/.../what-is-it.htm)

[http://www.arthrocareent.com/wt/tert\\_page/us\\_removal\\_faqs](http://www.arthrocareent.com/wt/tert_page/us_removal_faqs)



## Tonsils for Kids

Your tonsils and adenoids are lumps of tissue that work as germ catchers for your body. They are usually the size of a grape or smaller. The trouble is that sometimes germs like to hang out there, where they cause infections. In other words, your tonsils and adenoids start causing more problems than they solve.



Tonsils are located in the back of your throat and adenoids are found behind your nose. Sometimes these both get really big. If adenoids get big, they block your nose so it is hard to breathe through your nose. If tonsils get big, they can block the space in the back of your throat. This blockage can cause snoring and blocked breathing while asleep, this is called sleep apnea.

The surgery to remove tonsils is called a **tonsillectomy** (say: tahn-suh-lek-tuh-mee).

### What can you do to help get better after surgery?

1. Drink lots of cold liquids, eat ice cream and Popsicles, this will help you throat heal and keep you hydrated so you feel better.
2. Take your pain medication or Tylenol if you have pain, sometimes it tastes bad, and you can always add Kool-Aid powder to it so it tastes better or just hold your nose and gulp it down.
3. Rest for at least 7-10 days, catch up on your reading, watch movies, play board games, do an art project. No school for at least a week, sometimes 2 weeks. No gym class for 2 weeks.

### Books about tonsils:

The "O, MY" in Tonsillectomy & Adenoidectomy: how to prepare your child for surgery by Laurie Zelinger Ph.D.

Good-bye Tonsils! by Craig Hatkoff, Juliana Hatkoff, and Marilyn Mets

Let's Talk About When You Have to Have Your Tonsils Out by Melanie Apel Gordon

### Websites for kids

[http://kidshealth.org/kid/ill\\_injure/sick/tonsils\\_out.html](http://kidshealth.org/kid/ill_injure/sick/tonsils_out.html)

<http://kidshealth.org/teen/infections/common/tonsillitis.html>

[http://kidshealth.org/PageManager.jsp?dn=familydoctor&lic=44&cat\\_id=20210&article\\_set=30777&ps=309](http://kidshealth.org/PageManager.jsp?dn=familydoctor&lic=44&cat_id=20210&article_set=30777&ps=309)

<http://www.robythebear.org/>

<http://library.thinkquest.org/TQ0311787/story.htm>

<http://www.aboutkidshealth.ca/JustForKids/tonsils.asp>