

Tonsillectomy

What is a tonsillectomy

A tonsillectomy is the surgical removal of tonsils. Tonsils are made up of lymphoid tissue and help to fight against infections. However, in some people with larger tonsils these glands can perform less efficiently and cause frequent throat and ear infections or obstruct breathing. In these cases, surgical removal of the tonsils is beneficial.



What to expect after a tonsillectomy

Pain: after a tonsillectomy it is normal to have a sore throat and difficulty swallowing. The pain is typically at its worst a day or two after surgery and then it will gradually subside. Medication will be prescribed or recommended to help with pain management during recovery. The use of ice packs and sucking of ice cubes to relieve pain can also be beneficial.

Bleeding: bleeding from the surgical site is a risk.

When to call the surgeon after tonsillectomy surgery

Contact the surgeon if any of the following are experienced:

- bleeding from the surgical site;
- an inability to eat or drink;
- difficulty breathing;
- fever and
- vomiting.



Tonsillectomy cont

What to eat after tonsillectomy surgery

- Cold foods - the temperature of the food may help with the pain and swelling.
- Soft foods - mashed potatoes, pasta and soup.
- Juice, water, sports drinks - the temperature of the drinks may help with the pain and swelling.

Avoid

- spicy, acidic or hot foods;
- usage of straws while recovering. It is very easy to poke or injure the surgical site with a straw. For small children a sippy cup is fine as there is no risk of injury to the throat.

Reference/s:

Heisler J. 2011. Recovering after Tonsillectomy and Adenoidectomy Surgery. [Online]. Available from: <http://surgery.about.com/od/aftersurgery/qt/TonsillectomyRe.htm> [Accessed 29 January 2013].

Mersh J. & Shiel W.C. (n.d). Tonsillectomy. [Online]. Available from: <http://www.medicinenet.com/tonsillectomy/page4.htm> [Accessed 29 January 2013].

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