

When and Where Should I Seek Medical Attention?

You should seek medical attention if you experience any of the following:

- A fever of 38°C and above (a low-grade fever is common after surgery)
- If you experience persistent ear pain, frequent vomiting or vomiting of blood
- If you experience active bleeding at the back of the throat. In very rare occasions, you may have to return to the operating room in order for the bleeding to be stopped.
- If you exhibit signs of severe allergic reaction (e.g. skin rashes, breathing difficulty, swollen eyes, lips or face).

If you experience any of the above, please contact TTSH ENT Clinic 1B at 63578007 for an earlier appointment, during office hours:

Monday - Friday: 8am - 5pm
Saturday: 8am – 12 noon
Sunday & Public Holiday: Closed

After office hours, you are advised to seek medical attention at the Emergency Department, Basement 1, TTSH.

You may also choose to go to your nearest polyclinic or family doctor.



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Department of
NURSING

Tonsillectomy and Adenoidectomy: Post-Surgery Advice



What is a Tonsillectomy and Adenoidectomy?

A **tonsillectomy** is a procedure to remove the tonsils, which are clusters of tissue at the back of the mouth, at the sides of the throat. An **adenoidectomy** is a procedure to remove adenoids, which are located high in the throat, behind the nose and roof of the mouth.

These surgeries may be performed when the tonsils or adenoids become enlarged, causing infection or obstruction to the airway. Both surgeries are often performed together.

What Should I Take Note of After the Surgery?

The following instructions provide general information and advice regarding care after the surgery. Taking these precautions may help to reduce risks and complications.

DIET

- Avoid hard, crunchy, spicy foods, citrus fruits and juices, and fizzy drinks, as these may cause pain and discomfort to your throat.
- A soft diet is recommended, such as oatmeal, porridge, mashed potatoes, scrambled eggs, and macaroni.
- You are encouraged to drink plenty of fluids to prevent dehydration.
- Water, sports drinks, sorbets, apple juice, ice pops, ice chips, ice cream, yoghurt, bananas, pudding and pasta all tend to be well-tolerated.

ACTIVITIES

- You are advised to rest at home for a few days after surgery, and avoid crowded places to reduce the risk of developing colds or other infections.
- Refrain from swimming or any vigorous physical activity for 7 to 10 days after surgery as this may cause bleeding.
- As you start to feel better post-surgery, you may choose to be more active.
- General signs that you are ready to go back to your normal routine include eating and drinking normally, stopping pain medications, and sleeping through the night.

WOUND CARE

- There is a risk of bleeding at the wound site for up to 14 days post-surgery. Occasionally, you may observe blood streaks in your saliva and/or nasal discharge.
- If bleeding is minimal, sucking of ice cubes may help to stop the bleeding.
- **If you spit out more than a tablespoon of clots or there is a constant, bright red drip from your nose, seek immediate medical attention** at the TTSH Ear, Nose & Throat (ENT) Clinic or the Emergency Department.
- Your tongue or palate (roof of the mouth) may become swollen. This will normally go away in about a week.
- You may observe white or grey-white patches in your throat for some time. These will disappear once the wound heals.
- Ensure and maintain oral hygiene. You will be prescribed with a gargling solution to gargle and rinse your mouth at least 3 times a day.
- An appointment date will be given to you for a review with the doctor.

PAIN MANAGEMENT

- You may experience some pain and soreness after the surgery.
- Your ears may also hurt due to their proximity to the tonsils.
- Do note that adults tend to recover more slowly after a tonsillectomy. It is not uncommon for an adult to be off from work for 2-3 weeks and unable to eat solids for at least 2 weeks post-surgery. In contrast, an adenoidectomy may not cause as much pain. A child usually recovers in 3-4 days.
- Take your pain medications as prescribed by the doctor.
- If you are prescribed with antibiotics, complete the full course of antibiotics.
- However, **please stop the medications if you show signs of allergic reaction (skin rashes, breathing difficulty, swollen eyes, lips or face).**
- Taking and swallowing lots of liquids may also help to relieve pain.