



What are Tonsils and Adenoids?

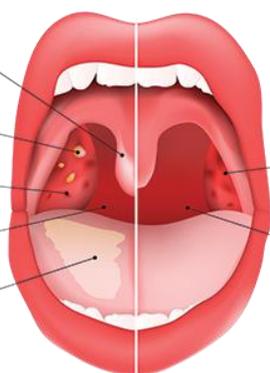
Tonsils and Adenoids are lumps of tissue (like the 'glands' that are in the neck and other parts of the body). Your Tonsils sit on either side of the back of the throat (pharynx). There are four different types of tonsils. Palatine, pharyngeal, lingual and tubal. When we refer to 'Tonsils' we're usually speaking about palatine tonsils. Adenoids are located high in the throat, behind the nose and can't be easily seen. You can't see them through the mouth without the use of special instruments.

Tonsils and Adenoids are usually larger in children but tend to shrink to adult proportions by the age of 8 to 12 years.

Healthy Tonsils and Adenoids are part of the infection-fighting (immune) system, they produce antibodies to fight bacteria entering your mouth or nose. They are not essential, and their removal will not cause harm to your immune system.

Bacterial

Swollen uvula
Whitish spots
Red swollen tonsils
Throat redness
Gray furry tongue



Viral

Red swollen tonsils
Throat redness

Do I need this operation?

Obstructed breathing

David may recommend this operation if you or your child have obstructed breathing, snoring, restlessness, or short pauses in breathing (apnoeas).

Frequent and severe bouts of Tonsillitis

David may recommend this operation if you or your child are getting Tonsillitis frequently.

As a general guideline:

- 7 or more infections in 1 year (and each infection is severe enough to affect normal life such as needing leave and time off)
- 5 infections each year over 2 consecutive years
- 3 to 4 infections each year over 3 or more years.

Long-lasting Tonsillitis

David may recommend this operation when the tonsils remain infected and do not respond well to antibiotic treatment. You may have a sore throat much of the time, often with bad breath and sometimes yellow, cheesy, bad-smelling and bad tasting material in the small cracks in the Tonsils (Puss / Tonsil stones)

What does surgery involve?

A Tonsillotomy or Adeno-Tonsillotomy usually takes 25 – 30 minutes.

This operation is performed through the mouth, and you will be put to sleep with General Anaesthetic.

There are usually no stitches, however there will be a small raw patch, like a graze, on each side of the throat where the Tonsils are. Healing can take up to 10 to 14 days.

What is a Coblation Adeno-Tonsillotomy?

Coblation refers to the instrument used to remove and shrink tissue. A Coblation Wand uses radiofrequency energy with saline (salt water) to dissolve tissue at a much lower temperature (40 – 70 degrees Celsius) than a traditional tonsillectomy. (400-600 degrees Celsius)

A Tonsillotomy operation is an alternative and less invasive approach to remove a portion the Tonsils. A Tonsillectomy is performed to remove 100% of the Tonsil. An Adenoidectomy is an operation to remove the Adenoids. Research shows that a Tonsillotomy is associated with a lower rate of complications, pain and bleeding compared to a traditional Tonsillectomy.

Rest and Recovery

This operation will usually require 2 weeks recovery. Patients should be fine to return to normal activity within 14 days.

How Successful is a Tonsillotomy?

For sleep-disordered breathing

Studies show that a Tonsillotomy should improve symptoms of sleep-disordered breathing in 80-97 in 100 cases. The operation is more successful if there are no other conditions that may be contributing to sleep-disordered breathing (such as obesity). On rare occasions, the adenoids may grow back again.

Vomiting and Pain Relief

Giving pain relief 30 minutes before eating can help. Vomiting once or twice after leaving hospital is common. If you or your child feel sick, stop food and fluid for a few hours, then try small amounts when they are feeling better. If vomiting continues contact our clinic.

CONTACT:

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Whangarei Hospital:	09 430 4100
Kaitia Emergency:	408 9180
Ambulance:	111



What to expect after this operation

- Bleeding may occur after the operation and is more common 7 to 14 days. If bleeding does happen, try sucking on ice and drinking cold water. The risk of bleeding is at around 2% compared to 8% with traditional techniques.
- Dehydration and too much activity after the operation may increase the chances of bleeding.
- Adults may return to high intensity activity and heavy lifting e.g.; Gym 3 weeks after surgery.
- You should not travel overseas or to a remote area for at least 4 weeks after your operation.
- You can swim 1 week after this operation. (If you have also had an ear operation, please follow those post-operative instructions and avoid submerging your head)
- After A Tonsillotomy, there is a small risk of tonsillitis. Throat infections due to colds and the flu can still occur.

Eating and Drinking

We encourage normal eating and drinking as soon as possible. You or your child may feel more comfortable having softer foods at first. (Yoghurt, Pasta, Egg, Mash, Jelly)

Avoid hot liquids, acidic (Banana) or highly spiced foods for several days. (Tomatoes, Pineapple, Lemon, Berries)

Cold fluids and ice blocks are a good alternative. Fluids are especially important to support recovery. Increased fluids help to prevent dehydration and the build-up of debris and blood clots at the operation site.

All patients will receive an ice block after waking up from surgery! Remember to ask your nurse.

Leaving Kensington Hospital

If you live within a safe distance of emergency care and have adult support around, you should be fine to go home on the same day. If not, you will be admitted for one overnight stay. Children under three years old with severe obstructive sleep apnoea might need to stay overnight at Kensington Hospital so we can monitor them more closely.

When to Seek **Emergency Care**

- If there is a large amount of fresh blood (more than 1 to 2 teaspoonfuls)
- If the bleeding continues for more than 10 minutes

Present acutely to your nearest ED or White Cross, If you cannot get to an urgent care facility within 30 minutes dial 111 within New Zealand and ask for emergency medical help.

You will need to be assessed as soon as possible at your local public hospital.

There is 24-hour ENT Specialist on call care at Whangārei Hospital where David and his consultant colleagues share the on-call duties.

If you live in the mid-far north present to Kawakawa or Kaitaia hospital for review.

Post Operative Pain and Symptoms

- A Tonsillotomy, with or without removing the adenoids, shouldn't be a high painful operation.
- As a Tonsillotomy involves removing only a portion of the Tonsil, leaving most of the Tonsil tissue intact, there is reduced trauma to the throat and less pain during the recovery period.
- The throat may be sore for 10 to 14 days after the operation.
- You may experience ear pain for 7 to 10 days following a Tonsillotomy.
- You will notice Tonsil tissue and white areas on the throat where the Tonsils were. The white changes do not mean infection and will go away within the first 2 to 3 weeks after the operation.
- Bad breath is very common during the healing stage. Some children's voices can be slightly different after the operation but soon return to normal after 3 or 4 weeks.
- Some children experience a change in their sense of taste after the operation, but this usually only lasts for a few weeks.
- After the operation, there may be some bloodstained saliva, discharge from the nose, or bleeding. Sucking ice usually helps with this.