

What should I look for when at home?

During the healing process, it is normal to have:

- White/grey areas at the back of the mouth where the tonsils were removed (see photo).
- Bad breath.



Typical appearance of throat during healing

These are not signs of infection.

Bleeding

It is normal to spit out a small amount of blood-stained saliva. However, if you/your child spits out or vomits bright red (fresh) blood or blood clots at any time after the operation, go to the nearest accident and emergency (A&E) department immediately.

When to seek medical attention (red flags)

- **Bleeding:** go to your nearest A&E department if there is more than half a teaspoonful of bright red (fresh) blood as this is an emergency
- **Fever:** call your doctor if you or your child has a temperature of 39°C or higher
- **Dehydration:** call your doctor if you or your child is unable to drink enough fluids despite regular pain relief or experience signs of dehydration (thirst, weakness, headache, reduced urination, dizziness or lightheadedness)

If you have any concerns please contact

Hospital

Outpatients

Clinical nurse specialist

GP Surgery

What You Need to Know About Tonsil Removal

To find out whether you have a Leg Club near you, or for any further information about Leg Clubs or the Leg Club model, contact
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www.legclub.org

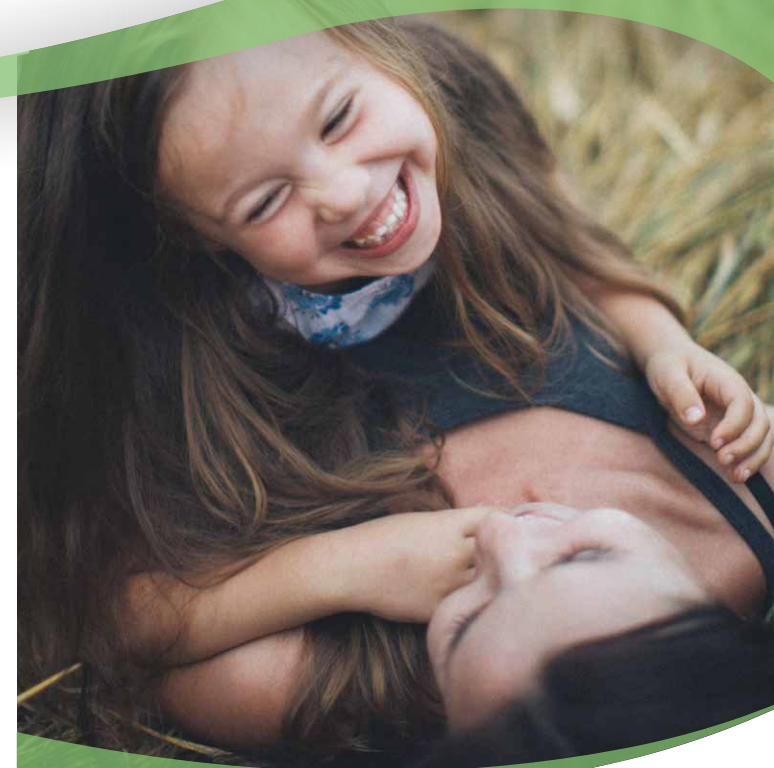


Written by the International Patient & Carer Advocacy Panel, a wound care initiative supported by the World Union of Wound Healing Societies and the Lindsay Leg Club Foundation.

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What are tonsils?

Tonsils are the small glands that sit on either side of your throat. They help protect the body from infection, however after the first 2 to 3 years of life they become less important. The body can still fight infections without them.



Typical appearance of Tonsillitis

Why are tonsils removed?

The most common reasons for tonsils to be removed are:

- Repeated episodes of tonsillitis (inflammation of the tonsils).
- Episodes of quinsy, when an abscess (pus) forms between one of your tonsils and the wall of your throat. Quinsy is associated with a severe sore throat and fever.
- Sleep-disordered breathing/apnoea, which causes snoring and momentary breath-holding during sleep.

What is a tonsillectomy?

A tonsillectomy is an operation to remove the tonsils. The operation lasts between 30 minutes and 1 hour. It is performed under a general anaesthetic, meaning that you/your child will be asleep for the whole operation and will not feel anything.

Tonsillectomy (2018) Wikipedia. Accessed: 1 Dec 2019

How should I prepare for a tonsillectomy?

The hospital should send information about how you/your child should prepare for surgery. You should tell your doctor about any medicines, vitamins or herbs you/your child are taking. It is worth asking whether other prescription medications can be taken before surgery and when to take the last dose. Anti-inflammatory medicines (eg aspirin and ibuprofen) should be stopped 2 weeks before surgery, because they can increase the risk of bleeding.



Tonsillectomies are usually performed as an outpatient procedure. If there are no complications, you/your child should be able to go home on the same day. You will need to arrange for someone to collect you from hospital because you will not be able to drive until the anaesthetic has totally worn off.



The ENT team at West Suffolk Hospital

Your surgical team will include anaesthetists, surgeons and nurses who specialise in ear, nose and throat surgery

Pain

- Painkillers prescribed upon discharge from the hospital should be taken for the first week, even when there is not too much discomfort. Do not wait for the pain to get worse (breakthrough pain), as this will be harder to manage.
- The level of pain during the recovery period normally varies from day to day. Worse pain – often on day 3 and day 5 after surgery – is expected. This does not mean there is an infection.
- To ease the pain and make eating easier, painkillers should be taken 45 minutes before meals, according to the instructions on the bottle or information leaflet.
- Earache is common and is caused by the sore throat. It happens because the throat and ears have the same nerve supply and it does not necessarily mean that there is an ear infection.

Eating and drinking

It is very important for you/your child to eat and drink normally; there is no bad food! Eating and chewing help recovery. Ensure that you/your child drink plenty of fluids to avoid dehydration.



Mouth care

Although it can be painful, toothbrushing is important to keep the mouth free from infection.