

## Operation Information

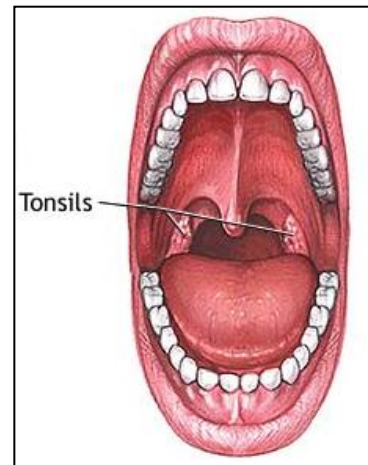
### Tonsillectomy

#### Introduction

Tonsils are masses of immune cells commonly found in lymph glands (lymphoid tissue) which are located in the mouth. Infected or enlarged tonsils may cause chronic or recurrent sore throat, abscess and upper airway obstruction causing difficulty in swallowing, snoring or sleep apnoea. Tonsillectomy is a surgical procedure performed to remove the tonsils.

#### Indication

1. Recurrent / Chronic tonsillitis
2. Peritonsillar abscess
3. Obstructive sleep apnea syndrome (OSAS) or snoring
4. Biopsy for histological diagnosis
5. Tonsillar malignancy



Source:  
<http://healthguide.howstuffworks.com/tonsillectomy-picture-a.htm>

#### Procedure

1. The operation is performed under general anaesthesia.
2. Tonsils are removed through the mouth.

#### Possible Risks and Complications

1. Common risks and complications ( $\geq 1\%$ )
  - i) Bleeding
  - ii) Pain
  - iii) Infection
  - iv) Local trauma to oral tissues
2. Uncommon risks with serious consequences ( $< 1\%$ )
  - i) Teeth injury
  - ii) Jaw injury
  - iii) Voice change
  - iv) Upper airway obstruction
  - v) Postoperative pulmonary oedema
  - vi) Cervical spine injury
  - vii) Death due to serious surgical complications

\*\* It is impossible to mention all the possible complications that may happen and the above is only a few important complications which may occur. Before agreeing for the operation, you must acknowledge and accept the fact that no matter how ideal the situation may be, these events may occur. Damage to peripheral organ, severe haemorrhage and leakage after operation, it may require another operation to deal with the complications.

## **Pre-operation Preparation**

1. Your doctor will explain to you the reason, the procedure and the possible complications. Patient will need to sign the consent form.
2. Inform doctor if you have a recent upper respiratory tract infection. The operation date may need to be changed.
3. No food or drink is allowed six to eight hours before operation.
4. Change to operation attires and removal of loose objects (e.g. dentures, jewellery, contact lens etc).
5. Empty bladder before surgery.

## **Post-operation Instruction**

### General

1. You will have sore throat and some swallowing difficulty after the operation which will last for a few days.
2. Small amount of blood stained saliva is normal.

### Diet

1. Advised to start with cool liquid and then proceed to soft and solid food gradually (according to the doctor's instruction). Analgesic can be used to relieve the sore throat.
2. Advised to clean up the throat to facilitate the clearance of secretions.
3. Gargling with salty water can soothe the throat.
4. Sucking of ice cube can reduce the chance of bleeding.

## **Advice on Discharge**

1. Please contact your attending doctor or go back to hospital for severe pain, swelling, purulent discharge, excessive bleeding, fever (body temperature above 38°C or 100°F) or difficulty in swallowing etc.
2. Avoid contacting patients with respiratory diseases within 1-2 weeks after the operation.
3. Avoid vigorous activities.
4. Follow up: Please attend the follow-up as arranged.

## **Alternative Treatment**

1. Antibiotic to treat infection
2. Nasal continuous positive airway pressure (CPAP) device for OSAS
3. Radiotherapy / Chemotherapy for malignancy

## **Consequences of No Treatment**

1. Recurrent tonsillitis or peritonsillar abscess and its complications
2. Complications of untreated OSAS
3. No histological diagnosis for suspected tonsillar tumour

Remarks: Should you have any enquiries, please consult your doctor.

### Reference

Hospital Authority – Smart Patient (Website: [http://www21.ha.org.hk/smartpatient/tc/operationstests\\_procedures.html](http://www21.ha.org.hk/smartpatient/tc/operationstests_procedures.html))

Compiled by Union Hospital Consent Form Taskforce

The above information is for reference only, please enquire your physician for details  
Our Hospital reserves the RIGHT to amend any information in this leaflet without prior notification