

ADENOIDECTOMY

Why do we do it?

The adenoids are a collection of lymphoid tissue situated on the back wall of the space behind the nasal cavity. It is normal to find adenoids in children and they generally decrease in size as children grow. It is common to find a chronic infection or enlargement of the adenoids in children.

Adenoidectomy is recommended when there is:

- Chronic nasal obstruction, snoring, obstructive sleep apnoea
- Chronic nasal discharge and otitis

How is it done?

Adenoidectomy is performed under a short general anaesthetic. The adenoids are removed with a curette through the mouth. Bleeding is controlled with a temporary small packing that is removed at the end of the procedure.

After adenoidectomy surgery

- After surgery, your child will be taken to the recovery room where a nurse will monitor him/her. You will probably be invited into the recovery room as your child becomes aware of their surroundings and starts looking for you. Your child will be able to go home the same day as the surgery once he/she has fully recovered from the anaesthetic. This usually takes several hours.
- It is best for your child to eat a light, soft, and cool diet as tolerated once they have recovered fully from the anaesthetic. Avoid hot liquids for several days. Even though they may be hungry immediately after surgery, it is best to feed them slowly to prevent postoperative nausea and vomiting. Occasionally, a child may vomit one or two times immediately after surgery.

However, if vomiting persists, your doctor may prescribe medication to settle the stomach.

- Pain following adenoidectomy is minor. Paracetamol is adequate but often not required. You should not give any other medications, either prescribed or over-the-counter, unless you have discussed it with your doctor.
- The child must be kept calm and rest for a week. After three weeks, exercise and swimming can usually be resumed.
- It is not unusual for children to have nasal stuffiness following surgery. The nasal stuffiness may last for several weeks as swelling decreases. Saline nose drops can be used to help dissolve any clots. You may notice persistent or even louder snoring for several days. A temporary change in voice is common following surgery, and will usually return to normal after several months. Bleeding is rare following an adenoidectomy. There may be some very light nasal bleeding.

Are there any risks?

Short term:

- More abundant bleeding might need a nasal packing, very rarely a transfusion
- Infection
- Due to the use of surgical instruments, wounds on the lips, tongue or mouth, or tooth mobility could be found

Longer term:

- Failure to resolve the ear or sinus infections, snoring, nasal obstruction or relieve nasal drainage
- A permanent change in voice or nasal regurgitation (rare)