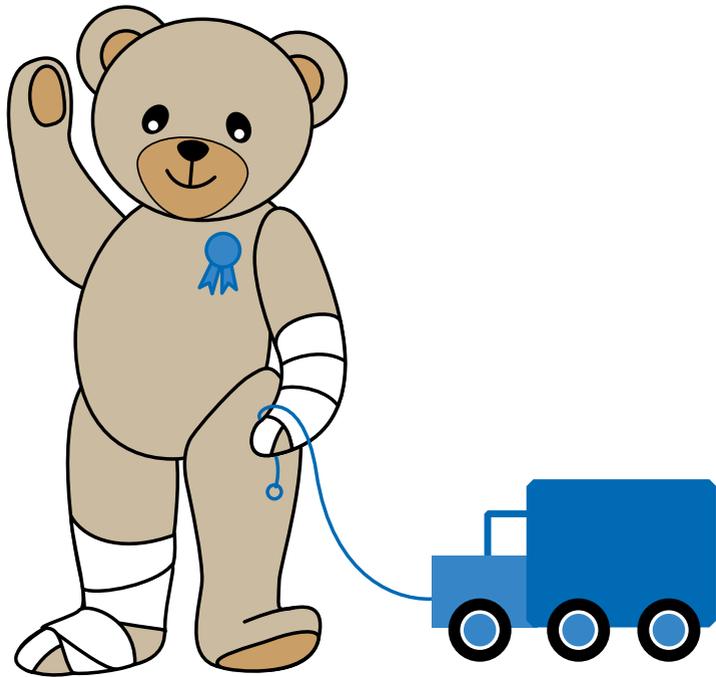


Tonsillectomy

Paediatric Day Surgery Unit



Patient information leaflet

What are Tonsils and why do they need to be removed?

The tonsils are 2 areas of tissue situated at the back of the throat. They are active throughout early childhood in helping the body's defence system build up immunity and fight infection. They are not essential for this purpose as there are plenty of other tissues around the body doing the same thing.

In many children the tonsils become repeatedly infected with bacteria and viruses which make them swell and become painful. By removing them, your child will no longer suffer from repeated infection in this area.

There are 2 main reasons for performing a tonsillectomy:

- 1) Recurrent Infection
- 2) Tonsils are enlarged and causing airway obstruction

Your child's tonsils will be removed under a general anaesthetic.

Are there any alternatives?

Repeated courses of antibiotics.

Will it be Painful?

Although your child will have been given pain-relieving drugs in theatre, they will require further pain-relieving medication on the ward and at home following discharge. We can provide you with pain charts if you think this will benefit you.

We recommend that you give your child pain-relieving medicine after discharge. The nursing staff will advise you of the dose and the frequency before your child goes home. To ease the pain and to make eating easier we recommend that you give regular pain-relieving medicine one hour before meals for at least the first 3 days. The worst of the pain is usually over by day 10. Earache is common and is a result of the tonsils and ears sharing the same nerve supply.

Next dose Paracetamol:

Next dose Ibuprofen:

What can my child eat and drink?

It is important that your child return to a normal diet as soon as possible and it is also very important for them to drink plenty of fluids.

Whilst ice-cream and jelly are soothing, the action of chewing harder foods such as apples, toast and crisps is helpful to the healing process and also helps reduce the risk of infection and bleeding.

When can my child brush their teeth?

Normal tooth brushing should be encouraged soon after surgery. This ensures that the mouth is kept clean and prevents bacteria causing an infection in the wound. It is normal for your child's breath to smell and their throat to look white following this procedure.

When can my child go back to school/activity?

Your child will require 2 weeks off school. For the first week your child should be encouraged to rest as much as possible.

It is best to avoid:

- Crowded places
- Smokey atmospheres
- People with coughs, colds and who are generally unwell
- Public transport
- Swimming pools
- Any boisterous activity
- Hot baths and showers

Are there any potential complications?

- Tonsillectomy carries a risk of bleeding. Bleeding requiring medical treatment is usually classified as spitting or swallowing 'more than a tablespoonful'
- If you notice any bleeding from the nose or mouth or your child vomits fresh or dark blood within 2 weeks at home, then immediately contact A&E on: **01483 464156**
- Infection – please seek advice from your GP

Discharge

Your child will be discharged home later that afternoon with any necessary medicines received from pharmacy. They must be taken straight home by car accompanied by two adults. There should also be two adults with your child overnight.

GP letter

A letter will be sent to your child's GP giving brief details of their admission. You will be given a copy of this on discharge

Follow-up

A follow-up appointment is not always required.

Key reference sources

- ENT Consultant RSCH
- www.ent-info.nhs.uk

Contact details

If you require further advice, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Day Surgery Unit

Telephone: 01483 406783 (Monday to Friday, 8am–8pm)

Hascombe Children's Ward

Telephone: 01483 464071 (24 hours)

Accident & Emergency

Telephone: 01483 464156 (24 hours)

If you are seriously concerned about your child, please take them to Accident & Emergency.

PALS and Advocacy contact details

Contact details of independent advocacy services can be provided by our Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) who are located on the right hand side as you enter the main reception area. PALS are also your first point of contact for health related issues, questions or concerns surrounding RSCH patient services.

Telephone: 01483 402757

Email: rsc-tr.pals@nhs.net

Opening hours: 9.00am–3.00pm, Monday to Friday

If you would like information documents in large print, on tape or in another language or form please contact PALS.

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