



**Spire** Children and Young  
People's Service

## Patient information

# Paediatric tonsillectomy

This leaflet provides some general information and advice about after care following your child's tonsillectomy. However you should always follow instructions of your child's consultant.

If you have any unanswered questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to ask your child's consultant or nurse for more information. It is natural to feel anxious, but knowing what to expect can often help.

The information contained in this leaflet is not intended nor implied to be a substitute for professional medical advice nor is it intended to be for medical diagnosis or treatment.

	<b>Children's Ward: 0161 447 6914</b>
	<b>Out of Hours: 0161 447 6677</b>
	<b><a href="mailto:info@spiremanchester.com">info@spiremanchester.com</a></b>
	<b><a href="http://www.spiremanchester.com">www.spiremanchester.com</a></b>



**Spire**

Manchester Hospital

## What are tonsils?

The tonsils are glands of tissue (lymphoid tissue) situated at either side of the back of the throat, which help fight infection and are involved in early development of the immune system. Surgically removing the tonsils is called a tonsillectomy. Removing the tonsils does not worsen a child's ability to fight infection, as there are lymphoid tissues at other places in the throat.

## Children may need their tonsils removed for 2 reasons:

- Some children suffer from frequent (recurrent) infections of the tonsils (tonsillitis). When infected tonsils can become swollen and covered with pus, causing fever and pain. The infection may need antibiotic treatment and lead to time off school.
- During early childhood tonsils are normally enlarged and in some children this swelling can lead to snoring, disturbed sleep and periods of breath holding (apnoeas). This type of sleeping is called either sleep disordered

breathing (SDB) or obstructive sleep apnoea (OSA).

## After the operation

### Pain relief

Your child will have a sore throat. It is also common for earache due to the ears and throat sharing a nerve supply. It is important to give your child regular pain relief. The nurse discharging you will have explained how to take pain killers. You should always follow the instructions on the bottle. It is a good idea to give pain killers 30 minutes before food and before bed time to keep your child as comfortable as possible.

### Eating

Your child's tonsil beds (the caves at the side of the throat where the tonsils were removed from) will be sore and a coating of white/yellow slough will form. This is normal and is how the body heals itself. It is important to eat a normal diet with rough type foods to promote healing.

### Drinking

It is important, especially with smaller children, to make sure they are drinking enough and don't become dehydrated. They should

drink plenty of fluids but avoid acidic drinks, such as orange juice, as they will sting.

## Looking after you child at home

Children who have had a tonsillectomy can take up to 2 weeks to recover, and should have at least 1 week off school or nursery. It is important to avoid people with colds or flu and avoid crowded areas such as supermarkets and cinemas at this time. Swimming should be avoided for 4 weeks after surgery.

It is important to make sure they keep their teeth clean as this helps prevent infection in the mouth.

## Please contact us if your child experiences any of the following:

- Your child is in a lot of pain and pain relief does not seem to help.
- Inability to drink normally, which can lead to dehydration.
- A high temperature or fever.

**If you have a younger child please note that if they have excessive swallowing they may be swallowing blood.**

**Please note if your child is vomiting blood, or has any bleeding in the mouth go directly to your nearest Accident and Emergency department or phone an ambulance if the bleeding is excessive.**

**If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact the paediatric team on 0161 447 6914 or main reception on 0161 447 6677.**

**Spire Manchester Hospital does not have an accident and emergency department therefore if your concerns are of a serious nature please seek immediate medical attention from your local accident and emergency department.**