

Tonsillectomy- A brief note

Tonsils or more specifically palatine tonsils are mass of lymphoid tissue situated in the throat on either side of uvula. It is usually seen in children of 6 years and below. Lymphoid tissue is concerned with immunity. It usually disappears by 12 years.

Tonsillectomy is the surgical procedure for removal of tonsils. It is indicated when

- 1) it becomes enlarged and causes obstruction to breathing
- 2) it gets infected and acts as a source of infection resulting in recurrent sore throat
- 3) Cancer or lymphoma of tonsils rarely

Prior to surgery general medical status is assessed by blood investigations and ECG. Details regarding past and present ailments, medications, allergies should be shared with the doctor. There will be restrictions regarding intake of food and fluid before and after surgery. It should be complied with. Please read document named **instructions to patients posted for surgery** for more information.

Surgery is usually done under general anaesthesia. It takes half an hour to one hour usually. Main intention of surgery is to remove tonsils thus relieving airway obstruction and recurrent sore throat.

This is achieved in almost all cases.

After surgery the patient is kept in post operative ward under observation for 3 hours and then shifted to room. In cases where further monitoring is required, the patient is shifted to ICU. Oral feeds can start 5 hours after surgery.

Analgesic and antibiotic are given usually. Patient is kept in the hospital for one day.

It is advised to stay at home for 1 week. Body bath can be taken. Head bath is deferred for 7 days. Bleeding and pain can occur. If bleeding is severe the doctor should be contacted immediately. Bleeding can happen on the day of surgery or as late as 2 weeks. But usually it occurs within the first week. Throat pain does occur though its severity varies. Oral feeds especially cold semi solid food should be taken. It will reduce dehydration and chance of bleeding. First postoperative visit is on 7th day. Further follow ups are required only if patient has any symptoms.

This surgery is often combined with adenoidectomy and myringotomy. For details regarding these surgeries you may read documents titled **Adenoidectomy-A brief note** and **Myringotomy-A brief note** respectively