

Adenoidectomy (child)

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This fact sheet is for general information about this procedure only. It is not intended to be used as medical advice or to replace advice that your relevant healthcare professional would give you. If you have a particular medical problem, please consult a healthcare professional.

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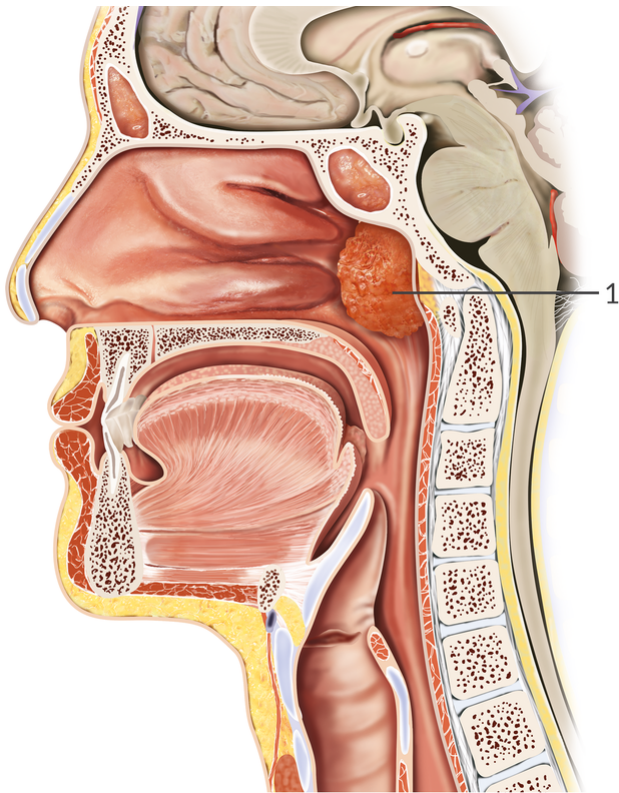
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What is an adenoidectomy?

An adenoidectomy is a procedure to remove enlarged adenoids. Adenoids are part of a group of tissues (like the glands in the neck or the tonsils) that help fight off infection from germs that are breathed in or swallowed.

An enlarged adenoid



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1. Adenoid

What are the benefits?

Your child should get relief from a blocked or runny nose, and may get a better quality of sleep. If your child's adenoids are large, removing them will allow air to pass through your child's nose while they are talking and eating. This may improve the quality of your child's voice.

An adenoidectomy can also help if your child has glue ear by reducing the risk of fluid collecting in the middle ear.

Are there any alternatives?

Your doctor may be able to give you steroid nasal sprays to improve your child's symptoms of a blocked nose and reduce the size of the adenoids. However, these must be used for a long time and the long-term effects are not yet known.

There are no other treatments for enlarged adenoids other than to leave them alone and wait for the problem to get better.

What will happen if I decide that my child will not have the procedure?

Your child will continue to have disturbed sleep. This can be serious and may affect behaviour and learning at school. However, many children will improve over time without surgery.

What does the procedure involve?

The procedure is performed under a general anaesthetic (where your child is sent to sleep). The procedure usually takes about 20 minutes.

Your surgeon will remove the adenoids through your child's mouth. They will place a pack in the back of the nose until the bleeding stops.

What can I do to prepare my child for the procedure?

Your child should try to maintain a healthy weight. They will have a higher risk of developing complications if they are overweight and if your child is having surgery to improve their breathing during sleep, it is less likely to be successful.

What complications can happen?

The healthcare team are trained to reduce the risk of complications.

Any risk rates given are taken from studies of people who have had this procedure. Your doctor may be able to tell you if the risk of a complication is higher or lower for your child.

Possible complications of this procedure are shown below. Some may be serious.

Adenoidectomy complications

- Bleeding during surgery or in the next 2 weeks. If your surgeon cannot stop the bleeding at the time of the procedure, they will place a pack in the back of your child's nose that stays in for 1 to 2 days.
- Infection of the surgical site (wound).
- Allergic reaction to the equipment, materials or medication.
- Adenoid tissue regrowing. Your child may need another adenoidectomy. The risk increases if your child has nasal allergies like hay fever.
- Earache. This is rare and usually lasts up to a week.
- Stiff jaw. This is rare and normally only lasts up to a week.

Consequences of this procedure

- Pain. Your child may experience pain when swallowing. This normally only lasts up to a week.
- A small amount of damage to your child's lips, teeth and tongue.

What happens after the procedure?

They should be able to go home the same day or the day after.

Your child will need 2 days off school to avoid catching an infection that could lead to bleeding.

Most children make a good recovery.

Summary

Enlarged adenoids are a common problem that usually do not need treatment. For those children who have a very blocked nose or disturbed sleep, an adenoidectomy should give them a better quality of life.

Keep this information document. Use it to help you if you need to talk to the healthcare team.

Some information, such as risk and complication statistics, is taken from global studies and/or databases. Please ask your surgeon or doctor for more information about the risks that are specific to you, and they may be able to tell you about any other suitable treatments options.

This document is intended for information purposes only and should not replace advice that your relevant healthcare team would give you.

Reviewer

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Illustrator

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