



**ANWAR E.N.T**  
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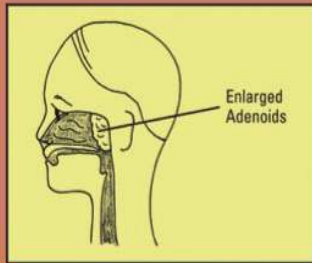
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# Adenoidectomy

## What are the adenoids?

Adenoids are small glands in the throat, at the back of the nose. In younger children they are there to fight germs. We believe that after the age of about three years, the adenoids are no longer needed.



## Do we need our adenoids?

Your body can still fight germs without your adenoids. They probably only act to help fight infection during the first three years of life; after then, we only take them out if they are doing more harm than good.

## Why do adenoids cause problems?

- Sometimes children have adenoids so big that they have a blocked nose, so that they have to breathe through their mouths.
- They snore at night, and some children even stop breathing for a few seconds while they are asleep.
- The adenoids can also cause ear problems by preventing the tube which joins your nose to your ear, from working properly, resulting in hearing loss and ear infections.

## Some benefits of removing adenoids

### For children with glue ear

For children over three years of age, removing the adenoid at the same time as putting grommets in the ears, seems to help stop the glue ear coming back.

## Reduces colds and sinus infections

Removing the adenoid may reduce the problem of a blocked nose and sinus problems when your child has a cold.

## Is there an age limit for adenoidectomy?

Adenoidectomy is generally avoided in very small children because of the small risk of blood loss during or after the operation. There is no upper age limit, but the adenoid has usually shrunk to almost nothing by teenage years.

## How are the adenoids removed?

The adenoids are removed either through the mouth or through the nose, with no cuts or stitches on the outside. They may be scraped away using a 'curette', or removed using electrical instruments (coblation).

## Is it true that the adenoid may grow back?

This is possible but uncommon.

## Who is suitable for day case surgery and who would require inpatient stay?

Generally, children who are fit and well with no bleeding or bruising disorders are fit for day surgery.

## What is the recovery time after surgery?

It is wise to allow a one week convalescence period.

## Is there any long-term risk to having your adenoids removed (e.g. reduced immune function)?

There is no good evidence that adenoidectomy reduces immune function or makes people more prone to chest infections. If possible, it is probably wise to avoid adenoidectomy in children less than three years of age as the adenoids may be helping develop their ability to fight off infections.

## What makes you decide to remove the tonsils at the same time?

If your child gets lots of tonsillitis (sore throats) or has difficulty breathing at night then we may decide to take out the tonsils at the same time as the adenoids.

## What are the alternatives to having the adenoid removed?

Your adenoids get smaller as you grow older, so you may find that nose and ear problems get better with time. Surgery will make these problems get better more quickly, but it has a small risk. You should discuss with your surgeon whether to wait and see, or have surgery now.

For some children, using a steroid nasal spray will help to reduce congestion in the nose and adenoid and may be helpful to try before deciding on surgery.

Antibiotics are usually not helpful and may only produce temporary relief from infected nasal discharge. They have side effects and may encourage "super-bugs" that are resistant to antibiotics.

There is no evidence that alternative treatments such as homeopathy or cranial osteopathy are helpful for tonsil problems.

Signing a consent form does not mean that your child has to have the operation; you may change your mind about the operation at any time.

You may wish to ask your own GP to arrange a second opinion with another specialist.

## Preparing for your child's operation or things to do before your child's operation

Arrange for a week at home or off school after the operation.

## Things we need to know before the operation

Let us know if your child has a sore throat or cold in the week before the operation - it will be safer to put it off for a few weeks. It is very important to tell us if your child has any unusual bleeding or bruising problems, or if this type of problem might run in your family.

## How is the operation done?

- Your child will be asleep.
- We will take his or her adenoids out through the mouth, and then stop the bleeding. This takes about 10 minutes.
- Your child will then go to a recovery area to be watched carefully as he or she wakes up from the anaesthetic.
- He or she will be away from the ward for about an hour in total.