



ANWAR ENT
The Right Choice For Your Health

Mr. Mohiemen Anwar MBBS PhD DOHNS FRCS (ORL-HNS)

Consultant ENT Surgeon | Chelsea and Westminster Hospital | Phone: 0207 117 2437 | Mob: 07541 51 6454
E-Mail: secretary@anwar-ent.com | The Westminster Wing outpatient, Chelsea and Westminster Private Care,
Chelsea and Westminster NHS Foundation Trust SW10 9NH, GMC 6027494 FAX. 03300539680

Adult Tonsillectomy

What are tonsils?

Tonsils are small glands in the throat, one on each side. They are there to fight germs when you are a young child. As you get older, the tonsils become less important in fighting germs and usually shrink.

Do you need them?

Your body can still fight germs without them. We only take them out if they are doing more harm than good.

Why take them out?

We will only take tonsils out if they cause recurrent sore throats despite treatment with antibiotics. The other main reason for removing tonsils is if they are large and block the airway. A quinsy is an abscess that develops alongside the tonsil, as a result of tonsil infection, and is most unpleasant. People who have had quinsy therefore often choose to have a tonsillectomy to prevent having another. Tonsils are also removed if we suspect there is a tumour in the tonsil. A rapid increase in the size of a tonsil or ulceration or bleeding occurs if a tumour of the tonsil develops. Tumours of the tonsil are rare.



The removal of enlarged tonsils like this can relieve airway obstruction.

Do I have to have my tonsils out?

You will not always need to have your tonsils out. You may want to just wait and see if the tonsil problem gets better by itself. The doctor will explain to you why he or she feels that surgery is the best treatment.

You may change your mind about the operation at any time, and signing a consent form does not mean that you have to have the operation.

If you would like to have a second opinion about the treatment, you can ask your specialist. He or she will not mind arranging this for you.

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

Before your operation

Arrange for two weeks off work. Let us know if you have a chest infection or tonsillitis before your admission date because it may be better to postpone the operation. It is very important to tell us if you have any unusual bleeding or bruising problems, or if this type of problem might run in your family.

How is the operation done?

You will be asleep under general anaesthetic. We take the tonsils out through the mouth, and then stop the bleeding. This takes about 30 minutes.

How long will I be in hospital?

Surgery may often be performed as a day case procedure, but sometimes if you live far from the hospital or have any conditions increasing the risks of bleeding you may be asked to stay overnight. Either way, your surgeon will only let you go home when you are eating and drinking and feel well enough.

Possible complications

Tonsil surgery is very safe, but every operation has a small risk. The most serious problem is bleeding. This may need a second operation to stop it. As many as five adults out of every 100 who have their tonsils out will need to be taken back into hospital because of bleeding, but only one adult out of every 100 will need a second operation.

During the operation, there is a very small chance that we may chip or knock out a tooth, especially if it is loose, capped or crowned. Please let us know if you have any teeth like this.

Some patients notice a change in how food and drink tastes after the operation.

Your throat will be sore

Your throat will be sore for approximately ten days. It is important to take painkillers regularly, half an hour before meals for at least the first week. Do not take aspirin because it may make you bleed.

Eat normal food

Eating food will help your throat to heal. It will help the pain too. Drink plenty of fluids and stick to bland, non-spicy food. Chewing gum may also help the pain.

You may have sore ears

This is normal. It happens because your throat and ears have the same nerves. It does not mean that you have an ear infection.