

Fact Sheet

Adenoidectomy



What are adenoids?

The adenoids are small pads of tissue at the back of the nose above the throat. They cannot be seen when you look in your child's mouth as they are hidden by the roof of the mouth. The adenoids are located near the Eustachian tube, which is the tube that allows air into the middle ear. If the adenoids are large or swollen then your child may suffer from frequent ear infections or fluid in the ear, which is sometimes called glue ear. The adenoids help protect the body from germs. They are not the only organs in the body that protect us from germs, so your child will still be well protected if they need to be removed.

Why should they be removed?

There are a number of reasons why your child may need to have their adenoids removed, which include:

- Difficulty in breathing and sleeping at night if the adenoids are enlarged
- Constant mouth breathing due to large adenoids
- Frequent ear infections and/or fluid in the ears ("glue" ear)

What happens during the operation?

Your child will come into hospital the day they are having their operation. It is important that they don't have anything to eat or drink before the operation. You will be advised what time your child needs to be 'nil by mouth'. Your child should also not have any ibuprofen (Nurofen) or aspirin medicines for 2 weeks before

the operation, as these medicines may increase the chance of bleeding.

Before the operation commences your child will be given an anaesthetic to put them into a deep sleep. It will keep them from feeling pain during the operation.

There are different methods that the doctor may use to remove the adenoids. Usually they are removed through the mouth.

What to expect in the ward after the operation?

After the operation your child may come to a different section of the day surgery ward you brought them to for admission.

Your child may be a little sleepy when they first come to the ward because of the anaesthetic they were given during the operation to keep them asleep. They may also feel a bit sick for the first day.

When they wake up they will be given a drink. They can eat and drink what they can tolerate. It is very important that your child drinks before they are discharged.

The nurses will check your child often during your stay, checking their temperature, pulse and breathing.

It is very important that your child takes their pain medicine while in hospital to help them with any pain they may have after the operation.

How long will my child stay in hospital?

You should expect to go home the same day of the surgery unless your doctor would like your child to stay overnight.

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They will tell you this before your child's surgery so that you and your child can come to hospital prepared. The doctors or nurses will come and see you in hospital to let you know when you will be discharged and what you need when you are at home.

What do I need to know when my child goes home?

Your child may have a sore throat for a few days and pain relief may be required. They may also have slight nasal congestion for the first few days to weeks. This should settle as the area heals.

They can eat and drink anything they like when they go home. As always, it is important that your child eats and drinks a healthy, balanced diet.

Your child should only take paracetamol for pain when they go home; and remember they should not take ibuprofen (Nurofen) or aspirin medicines as they may increase the chance of bleeding.

You should keep your child as quiet as possible for the first few days and they should not return to school for the first week after the surgery.

When should I call the Doctor or Hospital?

You should call the hospital if your child has any bleeding and the doctor may advise you to bring your child

back to hospital. This bleeding can happen up to 2 weeks after the surgery. The bleeding may be from the nose or coughed up from the throat. It can also be vomited in which case it is often dark coloured.

A small temperature is normal after surgery but if your child has a high temperature for a few hours, call the hospital.

Remember

- Your child should continue to take their pain medicine when they go home
- It is important that your child eats and drinks a satisfactory amount when they are at home
- Call the hospital if your child has any bleeding.

This fact sheet is for education purposes only. Please consult with your doctor or other health professional to make sure this information is right for your child.

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