

My Tonsils Have To Be Removed!

Have you ever had tonsillitis? That's when your tonsils, in the back of your throat get sore and infected. If tonsillitis happens to you a lot, the doctor may suggest you have an operation to remove your tonsils. No more tonsils, no more tonsillitis! Or you may have really large tonsils that make it harder for you to breathe at night. That's another reason the doctor may say they should come out.

What are tonsils? Your tonsils are two lumps of tissue that work as germ fighters for your body. The trouble is that sometimes germs like to hang out there where they can cause infections. So, your tonsils can start causing more problems than they solve!

The surgery to remove tonsils is called a tonsillectomy. After this operation, kids usually don't have as many sore throats. And, if a kid was having trouble breathing at night, that problem usually goes away too. Without tonsils, a kid won't look any different and you won't have any scars that anyone can see.

How do doctors get the tonsils out of your throat? Will it hurt? Before you go to the hospital to get your tonsils out, you may need a blood or urine test. These tests might be done at your doctor's office, at a medical center or lab, or at the hospital a few days before your operation.

The night before the surgery, you won't be allowed to eat or drink anything after dinner - not even water. That's because your doctor doesn't want you to throw up during the operation. So, if you don't eat or drink, there's nothing in our stomach to throw up.

You'll also need to pack your suitcase and bring anything you want to have with you to go to the hospital. If you have a special stuffed animal or blanket, go ahead and bring it! It's nice to have something that reminds you of home when you're in the hospital.

You'll probably go to the hospital on the day of your surgery. Your mom or dad will help you get admitted. When you let the hospital know that you're there, they give you your room assignment. You'll also get a bracelet that has your name on it. Once you're in your room, you'll meet the nurses and other hospital staff who will take care of you. Your mom and dad can also stay with you.

Tonsils are removed in the operating room, so you'll have to take a ride on a bed with wheels called a gurney. When it's time for your operation, you'll get a medicine called anesthesia. It will help you fall asleep and keep you from feeling any pain during the operation.

During the surgery, which takes only a short time, the doctor will open your mouth and remove the tonsils. You won't feel anything. The doctor will quickly take care of any bleeding and before you know it - you'll wake up in the recov-



ery room!

You may feel sleepy and dizzy at first. But soon, you will feel a lot better and your mom and dad will come in to see you. You'll probably have a sore throat and maybe a slight ear ache.

After your operation, it's important to drink fluids when you wake up. You should try to drink, even if it hurts a bit. This will help you feel better and get home faster. Sometimes kids stay in the hospital overnight, but most go home the same day as their operation.

The first 2 days at home should be spent in bed. Drink fluids and eat soft foods. This will help keep your throat moist and your body energized. Have your mom or dad stock the refrigerator with soft drinks, ice pops, gelatin, ice cream and pudding. Other good things to eat are mashed potatoes, scrambled eggs, pasta and warm soup. Yum!!

While you're getting better, you can take a pain reliever, such as acetaminophen. You also may get antibiotics to prevent infection. If you see little white patches in the back of your throat, don't panic - this is normal. After the first week, the white patches will fall off. Your doctor may also have you return to his or her office for a checkup.

After a week or two, you should feel much better. You'll be ready to go back to school and play with your friends again. Plus - you can tell them all about your operation!!