

Information leaflet for parents/carers

Removal of Adenoids



What are the adenoids?

The adenoids are lymphoid tissue, similar to the lymph nodes or 'glands' found in the neck, groin and armpit. Adenoids are high in the throat behind the nose and the roof of the mouth and are not visible through the mouth without a special instrument. The adenoids play a part in the development of immunity to infection.

Children who have their adenoids removed do not become more susceptible to infection; people live a normal life after this operation. The adenoids gradually increase in size during childhood but disappear in the early teenage years

What problems can they cause?

If the adenoids are enlarged, your child may have a blocked or runny nose, may snore and may be prone to ear problems.

Benefits of having adenoids removed Whilst most symptoms caused by enlarged adenoids will get better over time, removal of adenoids may help to unblock stuffy noses and prevent recurrent childhood ear problems.

Alternative treatments

These symptoms are common in childhood, becoming less troublesome as the child becomes older, so waiting is always an option. However if these problems occur persistently, it may be advisable for the child to have the adenoids removed.

Diagnosis

A doctor will ask you questions about your child's symptoms and will examine your child. It is important for the doctor to take a detailed history to ensure that surgery is necessary. It is important to tell the doctor about any other medical problems that your child or your family has before the operation e.g. low blood counts, anaesthetic problems. Sometimes the doctor will not advise surgery, but ask you to come back to clinic again at a later stage.

The operation

Your child will be admitted on the day of surgery and will probably stay in hospital for one night. You are most welcome to stay with your child during the admission. Before the operation nurses and doctors will see you and your child. If you have any concerns, please do not hesitate to mention them.

The operation is performed under a general anaesthetic. You are able to go with your child to the anaesthetic room until they are asleep. A nurse from the ward will also be with your child so if you feel unable to go to the anaesthetic room your child will be with a nurse that he/she knows.

When your child is sent to sleep, the surgeon examines the adenoids and removes them through the mouth. The surgery takes approximately 15 minutes to perform. Don't forget though that your child will be away from the ward for longer than this, as it takes time to send them to sleep and wake them back up again. They are usually away from the ward for about 45 minutes.

After the operation

When your child returns from theatre, they need to 'sleep off' the anaesthetic, so only parents/guardians should be present, to enable the child to get adequate rest. Whilst your child is asleep in theatre, he/she will be given some painkillers. We will continue to give regular painkillers on the ward after the operation.

Risks and complications

Whilst no operation is risk free the risk of serious complications is very small.

Loose teeth may be displaced during the anaesthetic or operation, but can normally be kept for the tooth fairy!

Occasionally bleeding can occur, if this happens in the hours following surgery then a further operation may be required to control it. Rarely bleeding occurs up to 2 weeks after leaving the hospital. This could indicate an infection where an admission to hospital may be required.

Caring for your child at home

Some children complain of pain in their ears. This is quite normal and can be treated with Paracetamol/Calpol.

We would advise that your child remains off school or nursery for about a week after the operation. If your child needs an appointment after the operation, it will be arranged.

If you feel your child's symptoms have improved since you last saw the doctor in clinic, please let the secretary know.

Talk to your child about his/her feelings and provide reassurance and support throughout the process. Encourage the idea that this operation will make him/her healthier. Be with your child as much as possible before and after the surgery. Reassure your child that this operation does not remove any important parts of the body and that he/she will not look different afterward.

Looking after and sharing information about your child

We have a duty of care to help patients and families understand how information about them is kept and shared and we include the following information in all our patient leaflets:

Information is collected about patients relevant to their diagnosis, treatment and care. We store it in written records and electronically on computer. As a necessary part of that care and treatment we may have to share some patient information with other people and organisations who are either responsible or directly involved in the patient's care. This may involve taking the patient's information off site. We may also have to share some information for other purposes; such as research etc. Any information that is shared in this way will not identify the patient unless we have the patient's and parent's/carer's consent. If you have any questions and/or do not want us to share that information with others, please talk to the people looking after your child or contact PALS (Patient Advice and Liaison Service) on 0121 333 8403.

Further Information

If you have any concerns about your child's admission to hospital, please do not hesitate to contact Jo Williams. She is an Advanced Nurse Practitioner and will answer any questions that you may have. You can contact her by phoning the hospital switchboard on

0121 333 9999 ask for bleep 55183

Information can also be found on the Internet. For more information you may find this website useful

<http://www.medicdirect.co.uk>

We hope this information leaflet will help you understand the treatment offered to your child. Information can also be found on the Internet. Internet access is available in the Child and Family Information Centre at the hospital.

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