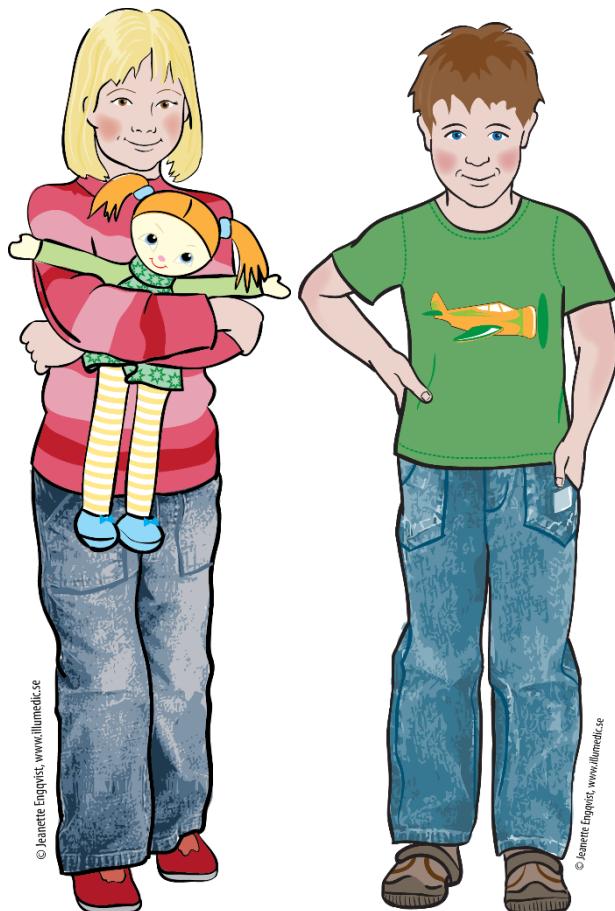


Information for children

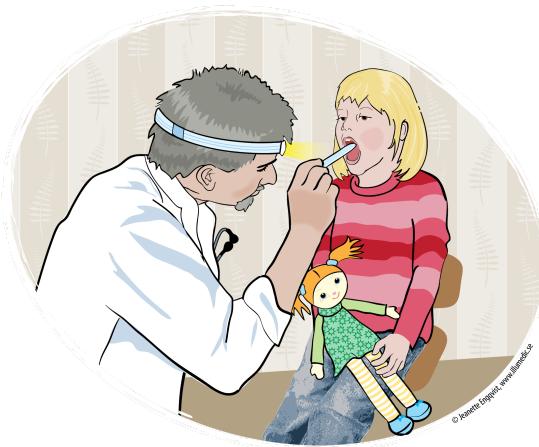
Soon, you'll have your tonsils operated on. The more you know about what is going to happen, the better you're going to feel before, during and after your surgery. That's why it's important that you read this information together with your parents or another adult who will be with you during your surgery.



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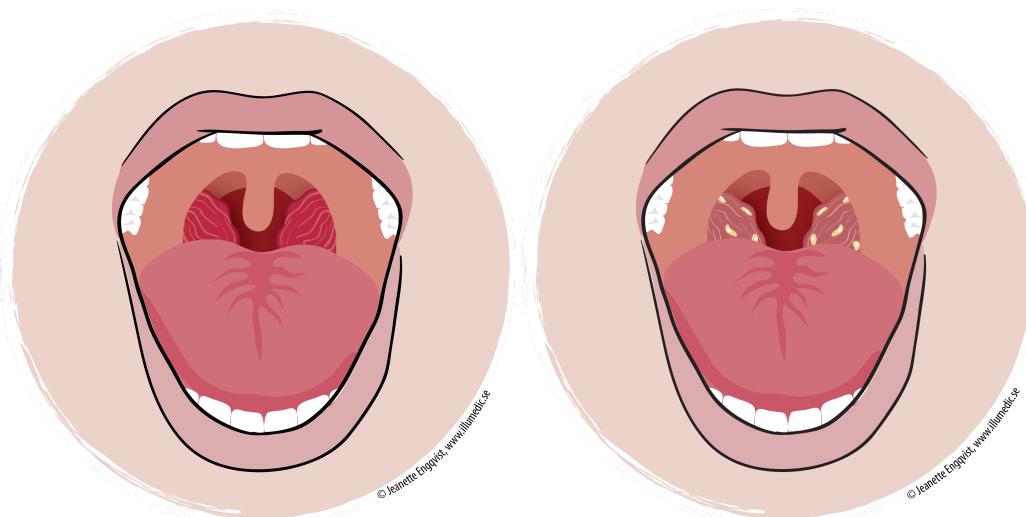
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What happens when you have your tonsils taken out?



Your tonsils are at the very back of your throat. If you look in a mirror, you can see them on either side of your tongue. They look almost like a couple of meatballs. Your tonsils can become infected and then you may get a fever and a sore throat. If your tonsils get infected often, you may need to have them removed to make you feel better. Another reason you may need to have your tonsils removed, is if they grow so large that it makes it hard for you to breathe normally when you are asleep. The doctor removes the two lumps of tissue in the back of your throat. Sometimes, the doctor doesn't have to remove the whole tonsil; it may work to just make them slightly smaller. You'll be asleep during the entire operation and won't notice a thing. Afterwards, the discomfort you feel because of your tonsils will disappear.

That's GREAT!



This happens before the operation

All doctors, nurses and assistant nurses who you've already met or will meet, want to make sure that you do everything necessary for the surgery so that it goes as smoothly as possible for you, and that you recover as quickly as possible afterwards. Here is a list of things to do and things you should not do. There are things you need to know the day before surgery and on the day of the surgery:

Things to do...

Pack a favorite toy, a favorite book, a stuffed animal, a blanket, a photograph or any other thing that makes you feel safe. Take it easy, relax and get a good night's sleep the night before, so you are well rested on the day of surgery. Remove all jewelry and remove things from the mouth on the day of surgery. Things such as earrings, rings, piercings, bracelets, necklaces, watches, eyeglasses, contact lenses and detachable braces are to be completely removed. Take all medications as the doctor has given you and told you that you must take before surgery. Swallow them with a sip of water.



Do not...

Do not take any other medication than your doctor has prescribed. Do not take Aspirin, Magnecyl, Bamyl, Treo, cough syrup, cough drops, vitamins, or herbal supplements. You may eat and drink up until 6 hours before surgery. Six hours before surgery you shall NOT eat anything. This applies to all kinds of food, including chewing gum and cough drops. You can drink water up until 2 hours before surgery.

What happens during the day of the operation?

The operation on the tonsils is safe, quick and easy. Most people can go home the same day and don't need to spend the night in hospital. At the hospital, a nurse will ask you to change from your normal clothes into hospital clothes. Then the nurse will check your body temperature and your blood pressure. An ointment will be put onto a couple of places on your hand or arm, which makes the skin feel numb or as if it's "gone to sleep". Sometimes, you're given medicine to help you relax. After that, you might become dizzy and feel a bit strange. You will also get medicine that will help you from hurting too much after the surgery. Once the preparations are over, you have to lie down on a special bed.

General Anesthesia

Your parents will be with you when it's time to enter the operating room. All the staff wear the same kind of clothes and special hats. They all look very funny. In the operating room, there are a lot of machines, screens, tubes, lights and other equipment. It's almost like being in a spaceship. Really cool! The doctors and nurses use all of this equipment to make sure that you sleep safe and sound, and so that they can operate on your tonsils without you feeling anything.

A nurse or doctor will attach a plastic tube or “sleep tube” to your arm where the ointment was rubbed in. They use that to give you sleep medicine and medicine to take away any pain. Sometimes, you may also have to breathe a special sleeping gas through a mask. It’s like a real space mask!



Operation

You’re asleep during the whole surgery. During the surgery, the machines keep an eye on what’s happening in your body. The doctors and nurses watch how you are breathing, your heartbeat, blood pressure and how much oxygen you have in your blood.

The doctor uses a special instrument that keeps your mouth wide open and pushes your tongue down so they can operate on your tonsils. The whole thing doesn’t take longer than about an hour, but you won’t notice because you will be asleep!

Waking-up

After the operation, you are moved to the recovery room/“wake-up” room. You’ll be resting there while you wake up from the sleep medicine. Your parents will be with you in the “wake-up” room. When you start waking up, you’ll feel tired and perhaps a little dizzy from the sleep medicine. It may also feel strange in your throat and it may even hurt a little. Your tongue might feel strange, but that will disappear very quickly. Sometimes, you may also feel a little sick/nauseous. You’ll get medicine that will make you feel better and to help keep the pain away.

As soon as you’re completely awake, you can have something to eat and drink (ice cream usually tastes good!).



Most children can go home after a few hours. If you feel very sleepy or for some other reason, the doctor may want you to stay the night at the hospital. This is so that the doctor and the nurses can check that you're OK. One of your parents can stay with you at the hospital.

When you come home

Six things that will make you feel better while your throat is recovering:

Take your medicine

When you leave the hospital, the nurse or doctor will tell you how often you must take your pain medicine so that your throat won't hurt too much. It's important that you follow the instructions and take your medication on a regular basis, even if it doesn't hurt anywhere when you are supposed to take your pain medicine. The pain medicine stops the pain in your throat, or makes it hurt less. But you need to take it as often as you are supposed to for it to help as much as possible. Before you eat, you need to take pain medication half an hour to one hour ahead of time, that will make it easier for you to swallow. It's really important that you take all the medicine for as long as the nurses and doctor told you to.

Get plenty of rest

It helps to sleep with an extra pillow to lift up your head a little.

You'll need lots of rest for a couple of days. Go slow. After a couple of days, you can get up and even go outside for a bit. But you have to take it easy for two weeks. Don't go back to school right after surgery. And avoid playing with friends. They may carry germs or have some kind of bacteria without even knowing it. After surgery it's easier to catch something because you are more sensitive. If you want to spend time outside, that's great, but you can't run, jump or do sports, and you should avoid doing things that make you tired.

Speak quietly

Your voice might sound a little different after surgery, but this should go away once your throat has healed. It's good for your voice to take it easy, don't scream or sing out loud since this can make your throat hurt more than it should.

Drink plenty of water

It's important that you drink a lot. This will help you feel better. Having a dry throat may hurt, that's why drinking can help reduce pain. You are allowed to drink whatever you want, but some people think that fizzy drinks are causing discomfort. Remember to drink slowly, small sips, that will help since it may be hard to swallow at first. Chewing gum is also a good idea, it makes more saliva in your mouth, and that can help make your throat feel better.



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Take it easy with food

The day of the surgery, your throat will be pretty sore, and you may feel nausea. This will pass, but you need to go slow when you eat. Most kinds of food are ok to eat, and won't hurt your throat too much. Try to avoid hot drinks and food the first couple of days after surgery. Soft food is often easier to start with, this is easier to swallow.

Here are some examples:

- Ice cream, ice lollies/popsicle
- Chocolate and vanilla pudding
- Soup, stewed fruit and berries
- Yoghurt
- Mashed potatoes or sweet potatoes, pancakes, omelettes
- Macaroni/pasta/sticky rice
- Smoothies, milkshakes

Food you should avoid:

Hard and crispy food may scratch you, and can be difficult to swallow, and makes your throat hurt. Some examples are:

- Crisps/potato chips and other such snacks
- Hard bread (e.g. crisp bread), rusks and hard biscuits/cookies
- Hard apples

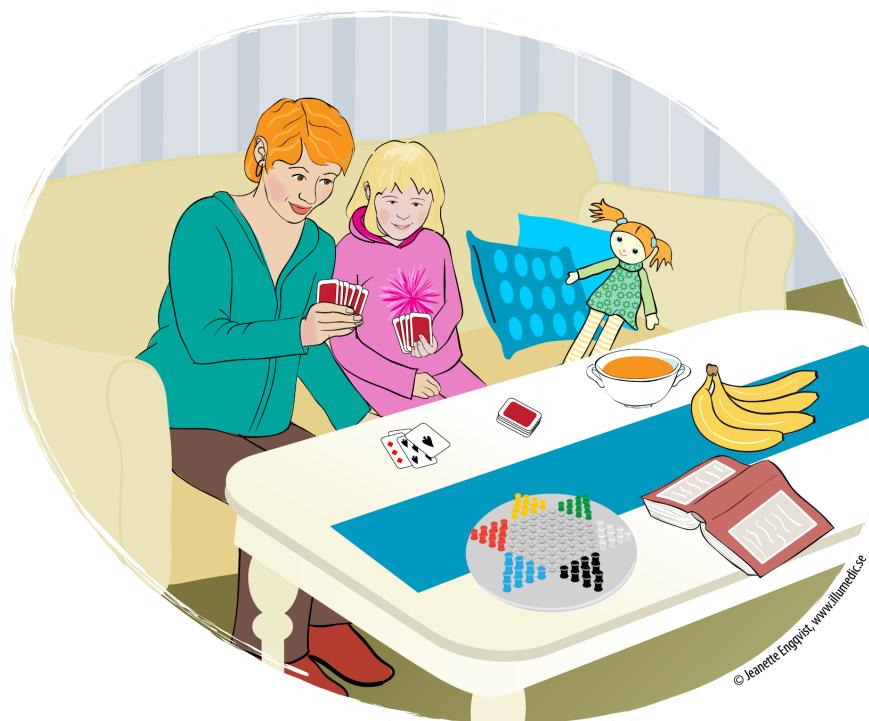
Some food can make your throat sting, *like*:

- Citrus fruits and citrus juice (oranges and orange juice)
- Ketchup, mustard and spicy food

TIPS on more fun and helpful information

If you ask your parents, they can help you go to the link www.tonsilloperation.se. Here you can listen to the story of Moa who needs to get surgery because she gets a lot of throat infections and Elias who has to have surgery because he has large tonsils that make it hard for him to breathe normally when he's asleep.

Visit www.narkosewebben.se if you want to find out more about what actually happens when you go to the hospital and have to have an anaesthetic for an operation. You can come along to the clown hospital, meet spy-scout Hilding Vilding, paint and play, play games, watch films and meet lots of kids who've been in hospital.



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