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## WHAT IS AN ADENOIDECTOMY?

An adenoidectomy is the surgical removal of the adenoids.

### **What are adenoids?**

Adenoids are small lumps of tissue at the back of the nose. They are part of the immune system. In younger children, the adenoids help fight germs. The body can still fight germs without adenoids. They are taken out of the body if the adenoids are doing more harm than good.

### **When do they get removed?**

Sometimes adenoids grow and block the nose. This may force the child to breathe through his or her mouth, may make them sore at night, and may even stop breathing for a few seconds while they are asleep. Also, if the adenoids are too big or infected they may make ear problems worse by stopping the tube that joins the nose to the ear from working properly. For some children, removing the adenoids at the same time as putting tubes in the ears seems to help stop the ear fluid and infections from coming back. Removing the adenoids may also reduce the number of colds and /or sinus infections.

### **The operation**

Arrange for three to five days off school. Let us know if your child has a sore throat or a cold in the week before the operation. It may be safer to delay the operation for a few weeks. Your child will be asleep for the operation (general anesthesia). The adenoids will be taken out through his or her mouth. There will be some bleeding, but this will be stopped before he or she is woken up. Normally, your child will go home on the same day as the operation, as long as they are eating, drinking and comfortable with oral pain killers.

## **Complications**

The operation is very safe, but there are still small risks. The most serious problem is bleeding, which is very uncommon. Excessive bleeding may need a second operation to stop it. If you see any bleeding from your child's throat or nose you must see a doctor right away. It is advisable to go to your nearest emergency department. It is very important to let your doctor know **before** the operation if anyone in the family has a bleeding problem. Also, there is a very small chance that the doctor may accidentally chip or knock out a tooth, especially if it is already loose, capped or crowned. Please let your doctor or nurse know if your child any teeth like this.

## **After the operation**

Some children feel sick after the operation. This settles quickly. A small number of children find that their voice sounds different after the surgery. It may sound like they are talking through their nose. This usually goes away by itself within a few weeks. Some children may have a stiff neck one or two days afterwards.

## **Care Instructions**

Most children need about three to five days off daycare or school. They should rest at home quietly, away from busy and smoky places Stay away from people with coughs and colds. Your child's nose may seem blocked up after the surgery, but it will clear by itself in a week or so. The child's throat may be a little sore, eating food will help your child's throat to heal, and he or she may eat normal food as long as they are comfortable to swallow. Your child may have sore ears. This is normal. It happens because your throat and ears have the same nerves. It does not mean your child has an ear infection.

Bad breath usually happens after surgery, but it goes away within one week. Give painkillers as needed for the first two to three days. Do not give you child Aspirin – it could make your child bleed. Aspirin is not safe to give to children under the age of 16 years at any time, unless prescribed by a doctor).

Before leaving the hospital, your nurse will go over care at home instructions with you.