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Here's some information  
about Tonsillectomy that  
I think you'll find helpful.

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## What Is A Tonsillectomy?

The tonsils are glands that sit on either side towards the back of the throat. They are made of lymphoid tissue and play a role in fighting infections. Sometimes they can cause problems requiring their removal. This operation is called a tonsillectomy.

More information on tonsil problems can be found at [julianhamann.com](http://julianhamann.com).

Tonsillectomy (removal of tonsils) is usually performed as a day case operation. In most cases, you will be able to go home six hours after the procedure.

## How Long Does The Operation Take?

The length of the op-

eration can vary, but it usually takes about 15 minutes.

## What Happens After The Operation?

After the operation you will be taken to the recovery ward for roughly half an hour before returning to your room. During this time, you will usually feel sleepy from the effects of the anaesthetic.

It is normal to have a sore throat after the operation. This usually lasts for one to two weeks. It is usual for the throat to become sorer for the first three to five days. After several days, some patients have sore ears. This is because the back of the throat and the ear share the same nerve supply, and this fact can

fool the brain into thinking the pain is coming from your ears (this is known as 'referred pain').

It is usually helpful to take regular painkillers for the first week after your operation. After a week, painkillers can be taken as required.

If you look at the back of your throat after the tonsils have been removed, you will usually see a white coating on the sides where the tonsils used to sit. This is a normal part of the healing process.

Occasionally the sound of your voice can change. In children, it sometimes becomes more high-pitched or even squeaky several days after surgery. This

usually settles after a couple of days, and is caused by tightening of the muscles around the voice box.

After your operation, you should resume a normal diet, although it is best to avoid very spicy or hot food and drink. Whilst eating may be uncomfortable, it is advisable to have three meals a day, as this helps counter muscle spasm at the back of the throat, and can help you recover more quickly. It is often helpful to take painkillers about 45 minutes before eating. It is advisable to avoid alcohol whilst recovering from tonsillectomy.

### [When Can I Go Back To Work/School?](#)

Most people can go

back to work ten days to two weeks after the operation. It is advisable to keep two weeks free from any work or social commitments for two weeks after tonsillectomy. It is important that you do not exert yourself or undertake vigorous exercise for two weeks after surgery.

### Can I Brush My Teeth After Tonsillectomy?

Yes – dental hygiene is important after surgery. You should brush your teeth as normal.

### Can I Smoke After Tonsillectomy?

Smoking causes inflammation of the upper airways and impairs the body's ability to heal. Recovery from tonsillectomy will take longer, and the risks of surgery are

increased. For these reasons, it is advisable not to smoke either before or after tonsillectomy. Even one or two cigarettes a day will have this effect. Stopping smoking can be difficult. If this is the case, nicotine patches can be a helpful alternative before and after tonsillectomy.

### What Should I Do If....

#### My Throat Is Very Sore And I Can't Swallow Anything?

This is an unusual problem, and might be because you have developed an infection. You will need to be seen and have your throat examined. Sometimes stronger painkillers and antibiotics are required. If you are not able to swallow fluids, a hospital

admission is sometimes required.

### I Have Coughed Up Some Blood?

It is common to have blood-stained saliva for the first 12 hours following surgery. If you have any bleeding beyond this point, or are coughing up fresh blood or clots, please attend your nearest Accident and Emergency department to have your throat examined. Please note that private hospitals do not have emergency departments, so you should not return to a private hospital if you have any bleeding after surgery. Most cases of bleeding after tonsillectomy are treated with mouthwashes and antibiotics. Rarely a further trip to the operating theatre is needed to stop

the bleeding.

### Contact Details

If you have any questions or queries either before or after your operation, please contact me at [info@ent-care.co.uk](mailto:info@ent-care.co.uk) or phone 01892 610 737. If you have an emergency, please attend your nearest Accident and Emergency department. The hospital where you had your operation can also be contacted for advice.