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Jeżeli chcemy, aby te informacje w innym języku, proszę zadzwonić 01932 723553

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Website: [www.ashfordstpeters.nhs.uk](http://www.ashfordstpeters.nhs.uk)

# Adult Tonsillectomy

## Ear, Nose and Throat Department



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### **Further Information**

We endeavour to provide an excellent service at all times, but should you have any concerns please, in the first instance, raise these with the Matron, Senior Nurse or Manager on duty.

If they cannot resolve your concern, please contact our Patient Experience Team on 01932 723553 or email [asp-tr.patient.advice@nhs.net](mailto:asp-tr.patient.advice@nhs.net). If you remain concerned, the team can also advise upon how to make a formal complaint.

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## When can I return to normal activities and work?

It is advisable to stay off work and avoid strenuous activities for 2 weeks after the procedure; we can provide you with an employment sick note to cover this period.

## Any further worries?

If you are concerned after the procedure, these please consult your GP, the day unit where you were admitted or in an emergency the A&E department at the **Royal Surrey County Hospital**, Guildford, where we have on call ENT staff 24 hours a day.

Day Ward, Ashford Hospital: **01784 884127**

Royal Surrey County Hospital: **01483 571122**

Further information: <https://www.entuk.org/patient-information-leaflets-1>

## Consultants and Specialists

Mr Sam Cartwright, Consultant ENT Surgeon

Mr Andrew Cruise, Consultant ENT Surgeon

Mr Stephen Derbyshire, Consultant ENT Surgeon

Miss Pandora Hadfield, Consultant ENT Surgeon

Mr John Hadley, Consultant ENT Surgeon

Miss Marysia Kalinkiewicz, Associate Specialist ENT

Dr Tatiana Gutierrez, Speciality Doctor ENT.

## Adult Tonsillectomy

### Why do I need a tonsillectomy?

People who benefit from having their tonsils removed include those who suffer from frequent episodes of acute tonsillitis; tonsoliths (white lumps of debris which become trapped in the tonsils causing bad breath) or snoring and sleep apnoea due to enlarged tonsils.

### Will losing my tonsils adversely affect my health?

The tonsils form a very small part of the body's entire immune system, and their loss will not be significant nor will you be more prone to infections. In fact it is likely that they are no longer functioning well and the operation will improve your health overall.

### What will happen in the operation?

During the procedure you will be fully asleep under a general anaesthetic and the tonsils will be removed via your mouth.

### How will I feel after the operation?

You will receive plenty of medicine to control discomfort during the operation, and afterwards in the ward. We will prescribe strong

painkillers to use once you return home. It is important to drink and eat plenty (of all types of food) during the recovery phase as this helps the healing process. It is best not to try and eat until at least half an hour after taking the painkillers, so they are fully effective. The pain will get better day by day over the next 2 weeks although at some point, often 3-4 days after the operation, it often gets a little worse. Just continue with the same routine of regular painkillers and eating little and often. Chewing gum may help to keep the muscles active and painfree, which in turn helps with eating. Diffiam or similar mouthwashes and sprays are also helpful.

## Are there any risks?

Earache may occur due to referred pain from the throat, you may have noticed this before with acute tonsillitis. Let the Surgeon and Anaesthetist know beforehand if you have any loose teeth, caps or crowns. Your voice may sound a little different for a short time as there will be slightly more space within the mouth after the procedure. Sometimes it takes a few days for the muscles of the palate to adjust after the surgery and it is possible that during this time fluids can be regurgitated up and out through the nose during swallowing, this is very rare and if it does occur is likely to settle down without further treatment.

Bleeding is very unlikely afterwards (less than 3%) but occasionally patients need to return to hospital for observation while this settles down. It is normal to see some pinkish saliva (often on your pillow) but if you spit out more than a spoonful of bright red blood or you are concerned please seek further advice

from the A&E department at the **Royal Surrey County Hospital**, Guildford (not St. Peter's or Ashford Hospitals), where we have on call Ear, Nose and Throat (ENT) medical staff and emergency ENT beds.

In case of emergency, such as continued fresh bleeding from the mouth, dial **999** for an ambulance to the Royal Surrey County Hospital. Any operation carries a small risk of unexpected death from the combined effects of the anaesthetic and surgery. Death from any cause after tonsillectomy is rare.

## Scale to help understand the risks:

Common	Uncommon	Rare
1 in 10	1 in 100	1 in 100,000

For comparison, an individual has a lifetime risk 100 times greater of suffering serious injury or death in a road accident, than as a result of receiving a general anaesthetic.

## When can I leave hospital?

Most patients go home a few hours after the procedure but some are advised to stay for one night, particularly those with symptoms of Obstructive Sleep Apnoea.