

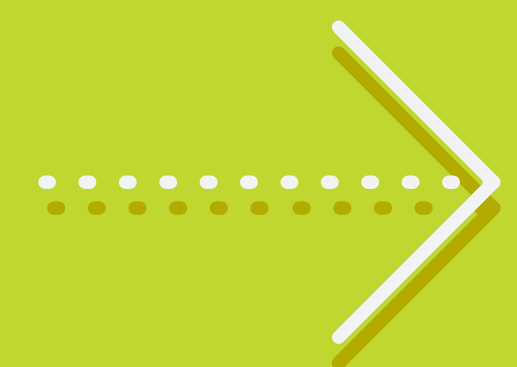


All About Tonsils and Tonsillectomy



**HOW TO FIND THE BEST TREATMENT
OPTION FOR YOU OR YOUR CHILD**

FIND A DOCTOR



Welcome

WHAT TO EXPECT: TONSILLITIS AND TONSILLECTOMY

The thought of you or your child having a surgical procedure can be scary. So it's important to be informed about all available treatment options. Having all of the information will help you make the best decision for long-term health. Additionally, being comfortable with your doctor's treatment plan, whether it includes surgery or not, will help put your mind at ease. Open communication between you and your doctor results in clear expectations and outcomes for you or your child.

If you or your child currently need or might need a tonsillectomy, this guide answers some common questions and concerns. It explains some of the most common tonsillectomy treatment options, how to prepare for surgery and what to expect after the procedure. However, every person and case is unique, so if you have questions that aren't answered by this guide, be sure to talk to your ear, nose and throat (ENT) doctor about any additional questions or concerns.



Tonsils and Adenoids

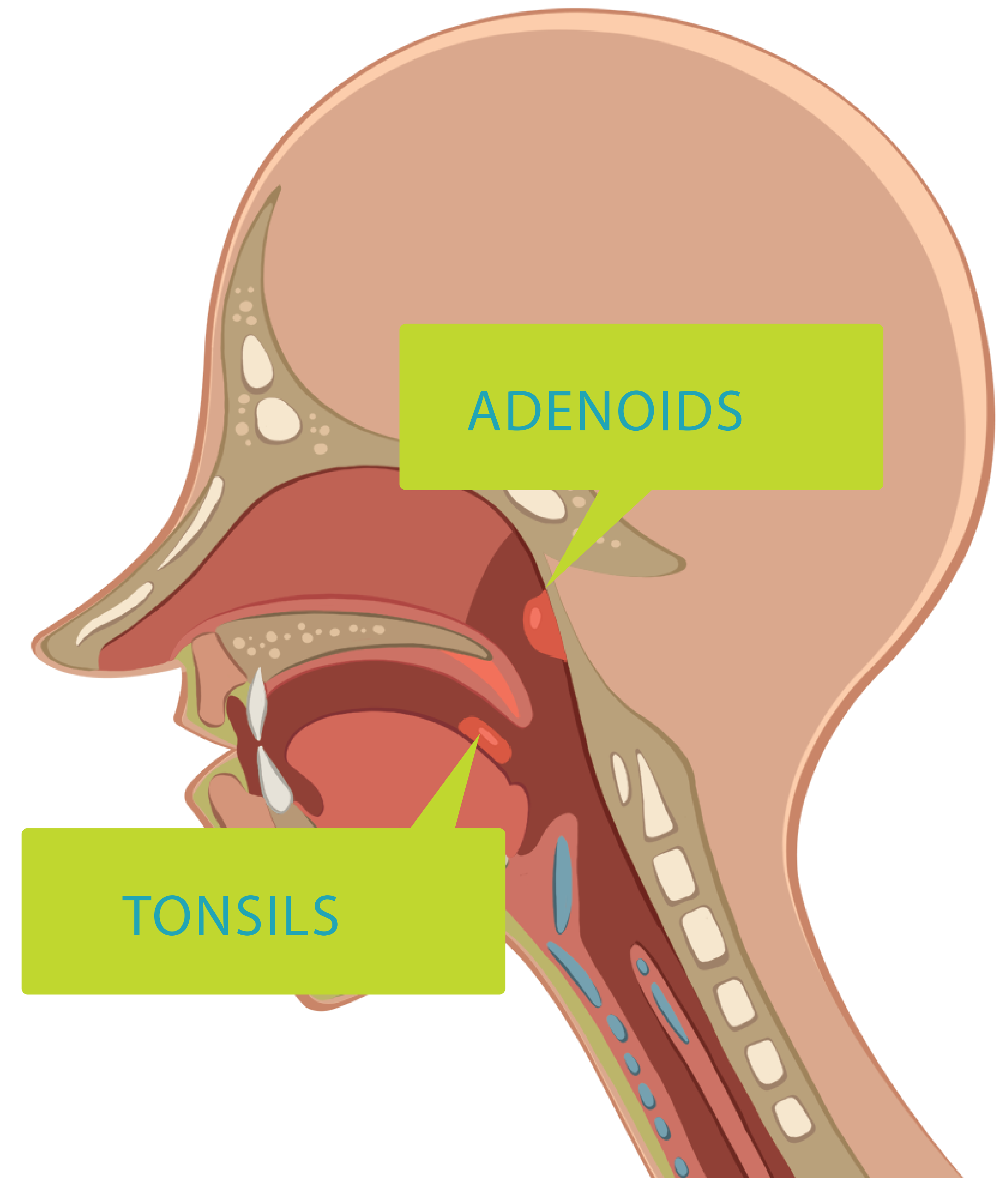
WHAT ARE TONSILS AND ADENOIDS?

Let's start at the beginning. What exactly are tonsils, and why do we have them? Tonsils are the fleshy masses found in the back of the throat, also known as the pharynx. There are four different types of tonsils: palatine, pharyngeal (commonly referred as the adenoid), lingual and tubal.¹ Most commonly, the word "tonsils" is used to refer to the palatine tonsils found on each side of the uvula at the back of the throat. When healthy, the palatine tonsils produce antibodies to fight bacteria entering the body through the mouth and nose.²

The adenoids cannot be seen without a special medical instrument, as they are located high in the throat. Like the palatine tonsils, adenoids help fight off infection by fending off bacteria entering the body through the mouth and nose.² The adenoid tissue grows from birth through age six or seven and begins to shrink by adolescence, between the ages of 10 to 19.^{3,4}



Tonsils and adenoids are the immune system's first line of defense.¹



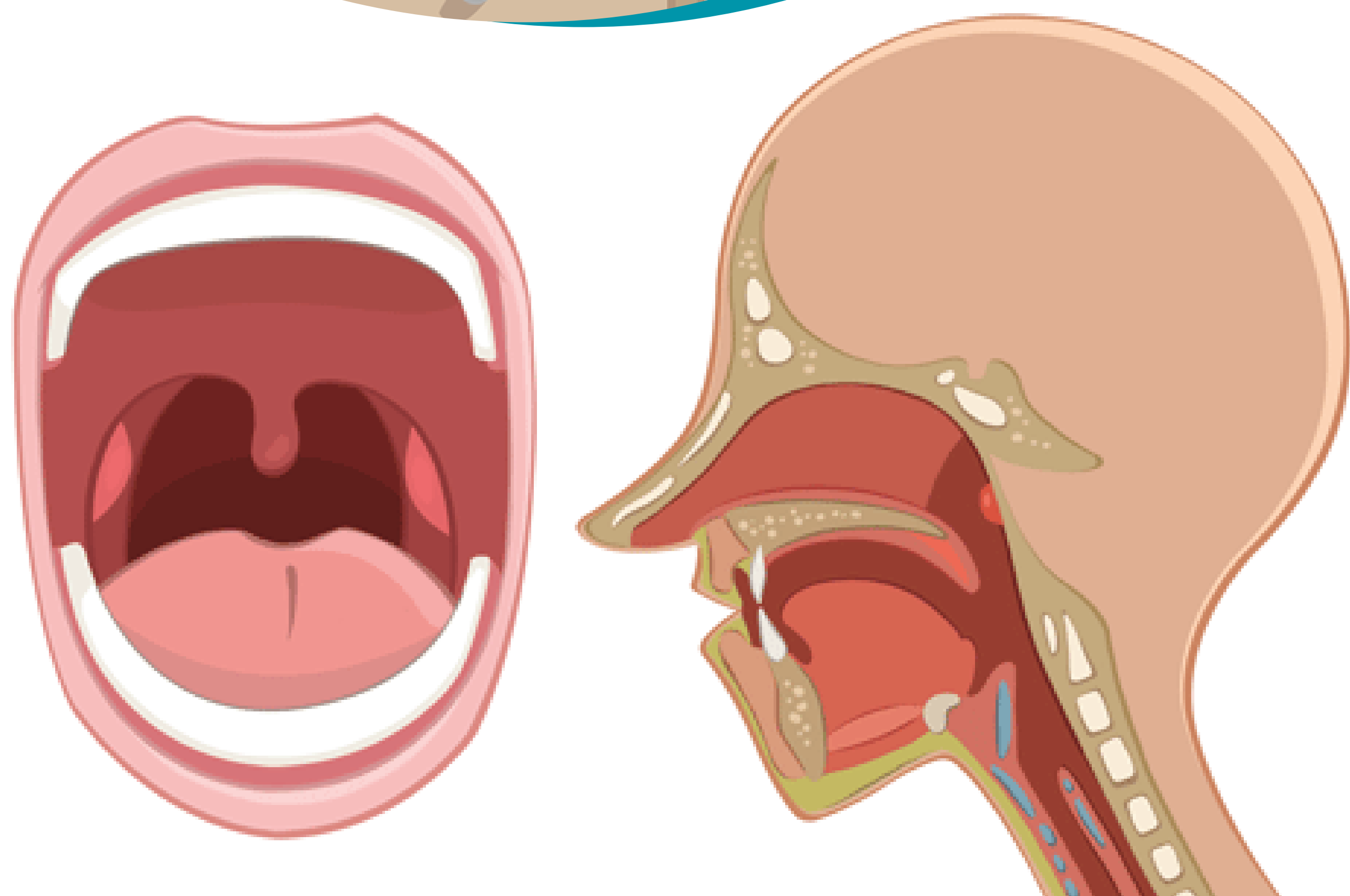


Tonsils and Adenoids

WHY MIGHT YOU OR YOUR CHILD'S TONSILS NEED TO BE REMOVED?

Infection in the tonsils caused by viruses or bacteria (also known as tonsillitis) can cause painful inflammation and swelling. Strep throat is a common bacterial infection that can lead to tonsillitis. Although tonsillitis occurs most commonly in children, anyone can develop the infection. Recurrent tonsillitis occurs when someone develops tonsillitis repeatedly in a short amount of time. Some doctors treat recurrent tonsillitis by having an ENT surgeon remove the tonsils and/or adenoids.⁵

Unlike tonsillitis, enlarged tonsils are not usually painful but may block the throat or make it difficult to breathe.² Chronically enlarged tonsils can also lead to sleep disturbances like bedwetting, and behavioral or performance issues for a child in school. Your child's pediatrician may recommend a tonsillectomy to alleviate these issues.⁶



If your child's tonsils or adenoids are frequently infected or enlarged (known as tonsillar hypertrophy), it may become necessary to have them removed.² Removal of the tonsils is known as a tonsillectomy and is one of the most common surgical procedures in the United States, with most patients going home the same day as surgery.⁷

QUESTIONS TO ASK YOUR DOCTOR ^{8,9}

- Do I or does my child need a tonsillectomy?
- Why is a tonsillectomy needed?
- Can we try other treatments?
- Is it safe not to get tonsils removed?
- Are strep throat and other throat infections still possible after tonsillectomy?
- Can sleep problems still occur after tonsillectomy?
- What are the surgical options for tonsillectomy?
- What are the risks associated with tonsillectomy?
- What can I expect for post-surgery and recovery?
- What is COBLATION \diamond technology, and what makes it different?
- Can you refer an ENT surgeon who offers COBLATION tonsillectomies?



SOME SYMPTOMS OF ENLARGED TONSILS OR ADENOIDS INCLUDE: ²

- Majority of breathing taking place through the mouth (as opposed to the nose).
- “Stuffy nose” sound in the voice when talking.
- Runny nose, but no cold or allergy.
- Loud breathing when awake.
- Persistent snoring when asleep.
- Persistent bedwetting.
- Recurrent ear infections.
- Restlessness during sleep

Tonsils and Adenoids Treatment Options

WHAT ARE MY CHILD'S TRADITIONAL TREATMENT OPTIONS?

Non-Surgical

Not all cases of sore throat, strep throat or tonsillitis require removal of tonsils and adenoids. Many times, non-surgical remedies like rest, soothing liquids and a series of antibiotics can treat occasional instances of these conditions.¹⁰

Some common home remedies include:

- Gargling salt water (mix 1/4 teaspoon of table salt with 1/2 cup of warm water) several times a day. (Note: Do not swallow.)¹⁰
- Drinking warm or cool liquids, whichever is more soothing.¹⁰
- Eating flavored ice pops.¹⁰
- Using non-prescription sore throat sprays.
- Getting sufficient rest.¹⁰
- Using a humidifier in the bedroom to reduce dry air while sleeping.¹⁰
- Sucking on lozenges or hard candy. However, children under the age of four shouldn't use this method because of the choking risk.¹⁰
- Using over-the-counter (OTC) pain medicines such as acetaminophen or ibuprofen.



However, if symptoms continue to persist after a week of home remedies, we recommend contacting your doctor to discuss treatment options.¹² He or she can determine with you whether a tonsillectomy might be the right course of action and help you [find a physician](#) (ENT) who performs tonsillectomies.



Traditional Tonsillectomy



Tonsillectomies are often performed using a method known as electrocautery, which is performed with a medical device that produces a high-level of heat (up to 1,112 degrees Fahrenheit) to burn and remove the tonsil tissue. Results of this heat can cause significant damage around the surgical site.¹³ This damage causes pain and discomfort following the surgery.¹³ Another risk associated with traditional tonsillectomy is airway fire.

TRADITIONAL TONSILLECTOMY PAIN MANAGEMENT RISKS

The Adverse Effects of Codeine

After a tonsillectomy, pain management is needed because of the damage done to the tissue surrounding the tonsils.¹³ Some pain management medication, like codeine, may be prescribed following surgery. Codeine is an opioid pain reliever that treats mild to moderately severe pain, and you may also find codeine in combination with aspirin and some cough and cold medications.¹⁵



In recent years, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has reviewed a small number of cases where a child developed serious complications or died after taking codeine to relieve pain following a tonsillectomy for sleep disordered breathing. It should be noted that all the children in these cases had a unique genetic ability to metabolize codeine at an ultra-rapid pace that causes the liver to convert codeine into life-threatening amounts of morphine - a powerful pain reliever that may cause serious breathing problems when not properly monitored.^{15, 16}

THE NUMBER OF PEOPLE THAT HAVE THE GENETIC VARIATION CAUSING THIS ULTRA-RAPID METABOLIZATION OF CODEINE IS ESTIMATED TO BE ONE TO SEVEN PER 100 PEOPLE.¹⁵

If pain management with codeine is necessary after a tonsillectomy, your doctor should prescribe the lowest effective dose for the shortest period of time, with instruction to use only as needed. Parents and caregivers should monitor children closely in the days following surgery for any unusual sleepiness, confusion or difficult or noisy breathing. These symptoms are signs of a possible overdose, and medical attention should be sought immediately.¹⁵

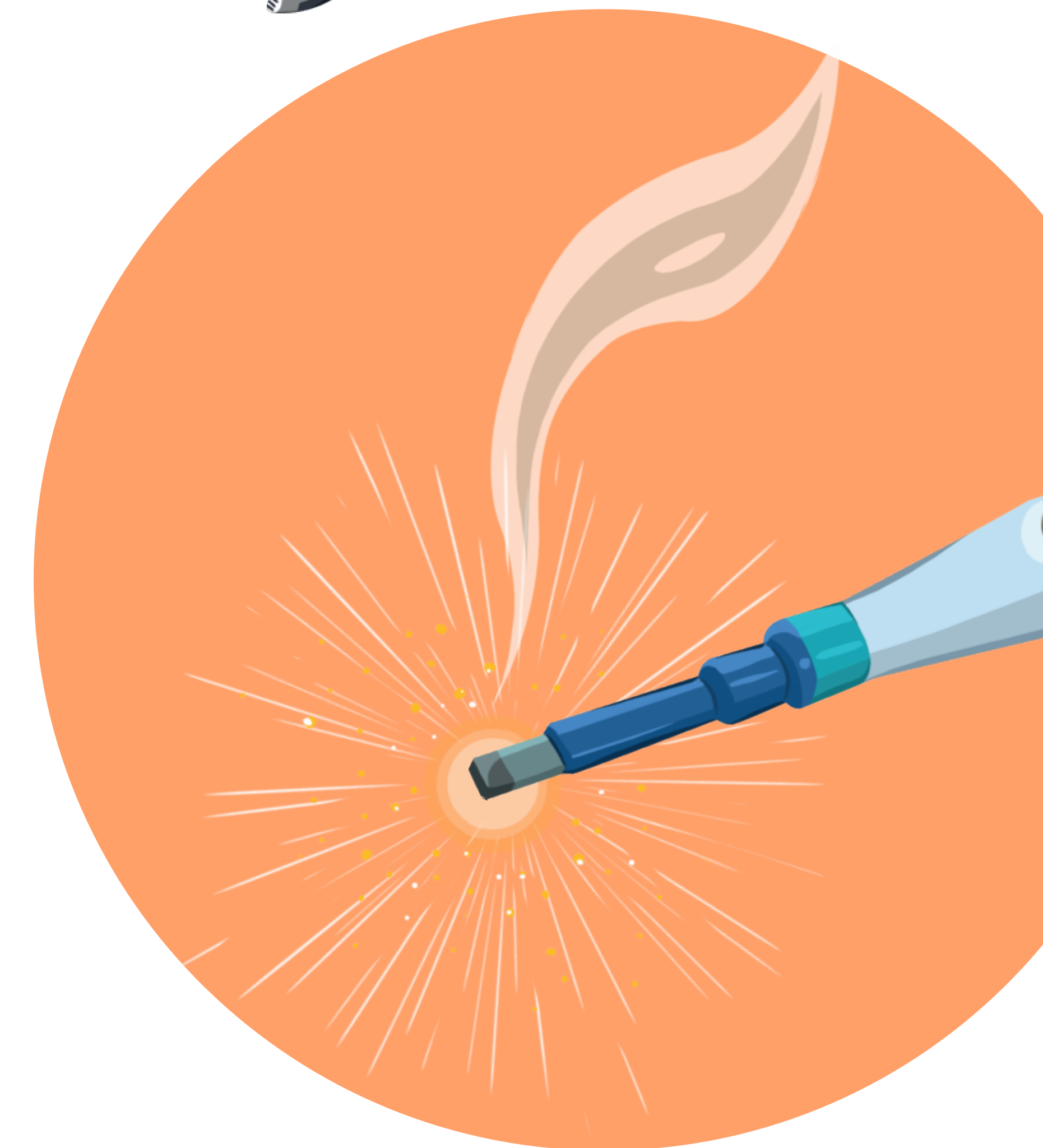
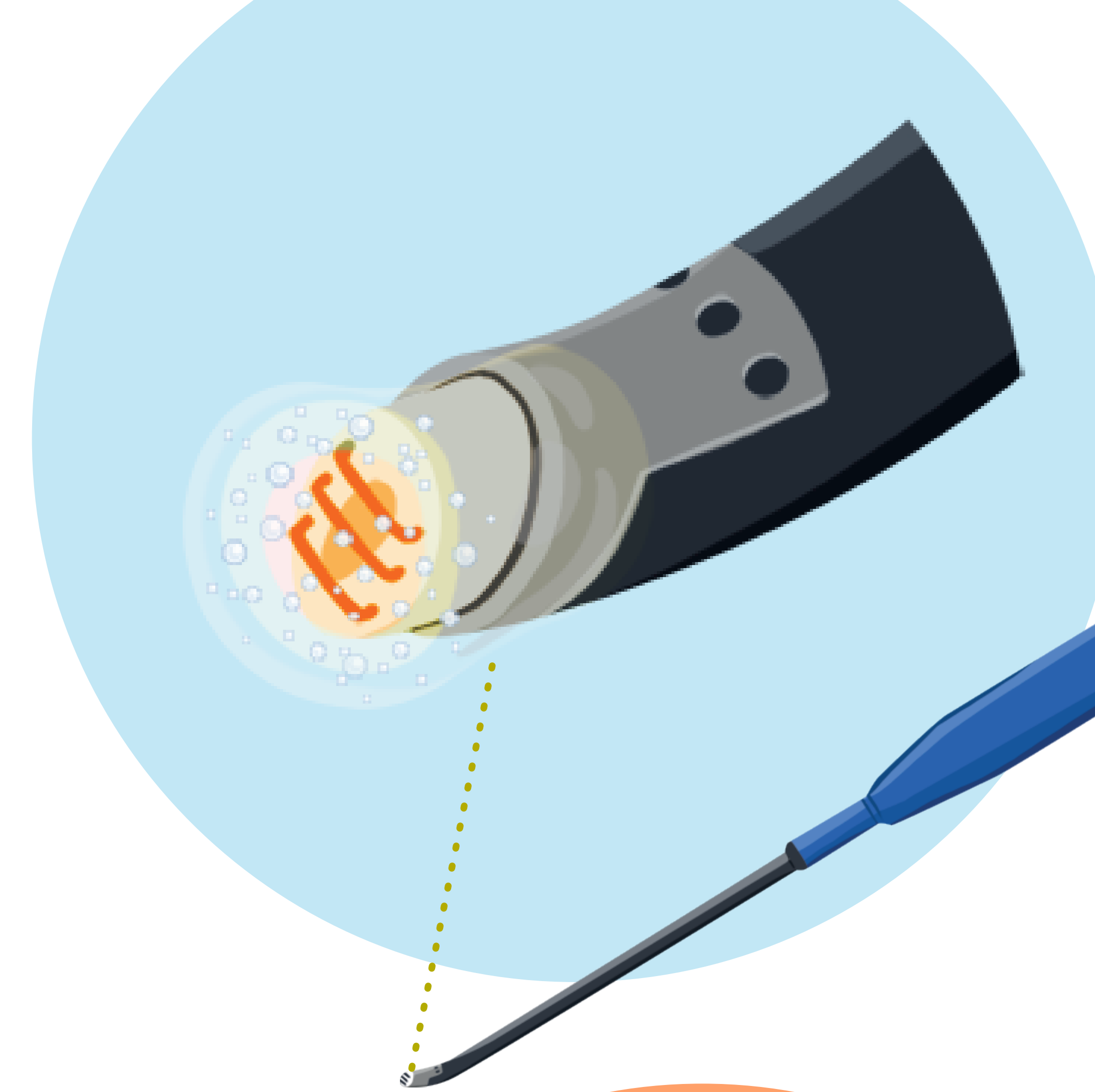
Always consult your doctor with any questions or concerns you may have about tonsillectomy before, during or after the surgery.

ALTERNATIVES TO TRADITIONAL TONSILLECTOMY

COBLATION Tonsillectomy

COBLATION technology is a surgical technique for tonsillectomies that uses plasma to precisely dissolve tonsil tissue molecule by molecule at a cooler temperature (up to 158 degrees Fahrenheit) than technologies like electrocautery.¹³ With this exact method and cooler temperature, the COBLATION device (also known as a COBLATION wand) removes the targeted tissue, while minimizing damage to surrounding tissue.¹³

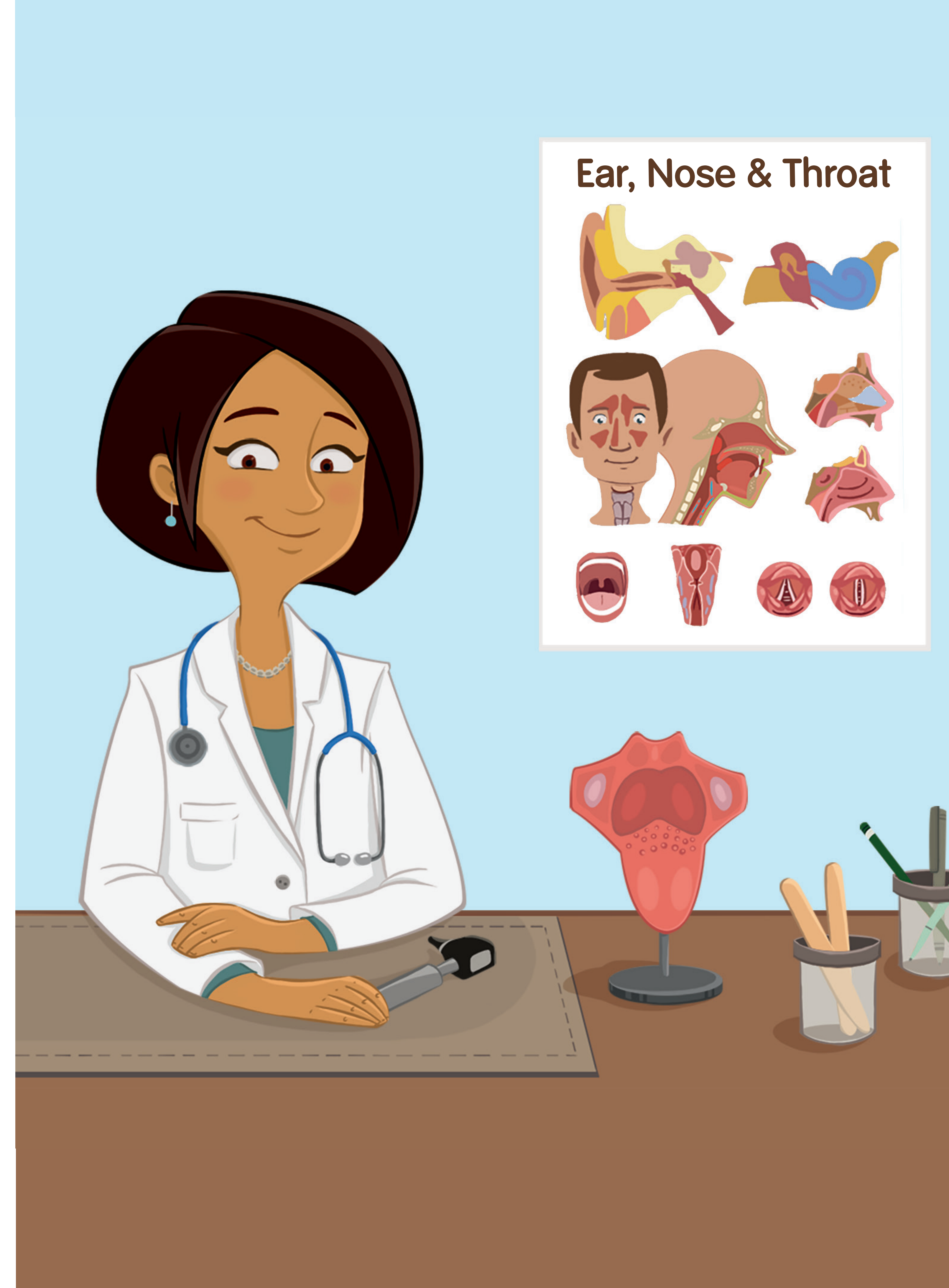
The word COBLATION comes from the words “Co-” standing for “controlled” and “-blation” from the word “ablation,” which is the process of reducing the size of something. A simple example of ablation is when the sun melts ice. In a more technical sense, COBLATION technology combines radiofrequency energy and saline to create a plasma field. This plasma field is able to remain at a relatively low temperature compared to other technologies, while still precisely removing targeted tonsil tissue. This combination of precision and low-heat technology minimizes the risk of damaging tissue around the tonsils.¹³



What is an ENT?

ENT doctors are physicians who specialize in the management of conditions and diseases of the ear, nose and throat (ENT), as well as parts of the head and neck. You may hear ENT doctors also referred to as otolaryngologists.

Regarding ears, ENT doctors treat anything from ear infections to congenital disorders of the ear. Hearing loss is one of the most common conditions treated by ENT doctors. ENT doctors also treat and manage problems affecting the nose and sinuses, like allergies, nasal obstruction, smelling disorders or polyps. And, ENT doctors diagnose and manage conditions affecting the throat, larynx, and esophagus, including tonsillitis, hoarseness of the voice, gastroesophageal reflux disease (GERD) and tumors.¹⁷



When Should I See an ENT?

YOU MAY WANT TO SEE AN ENT IF:



1. You or your child have a recurring or chronic case of throat infection, such as sore throat, strep throat, enlarged tonsils and/or tonsillitis.²
2. Home remedies are failing to alleviate the throat issue.¹⁰
3. You are researching options for tonsillectomies or want to talk to a doctor about surgical options available, including COBLATION \diamond technology.

If your doctor or pediatrician doesn't know an ENT who offers COBLATION technology, you can find one on the [MyTonsils doctor locator](#).

Tonsil Surgery Information

WHAT TO KNOW AND ASK

Prior to you or your child having a tonsillectomy, it's important to research, prepare and speak up. Be sure to ask your ENT all of the questions you have leading up to the tonsillectomy. You should also prepare your home for the time after the tonsillectomy. Your ENT may suggest having soft foods ready and a humidifier to provide moist air.¹⁸ You may also want to have a way for your child to write notes or draw pictures to communicate if his or her throat is too sore to talk.

It's critical to ensure any medications you or your child currently take are compatible with medications that may be prescribed by the ENT after a tonsillectomy. Be sure to share with your ENT about you or your child's medications prior to surgery.¹⁹

Possible Questions for an ENT^{8,9}

- Where will the surgery be done?
- How long does it take?
- What type of anesthesia will be needed?
- Will there be any pain?
- What are the risks of the surgery?
- When should eating or drinking be stopped before the anesthesia?
- When should we arrive on the day of the surgery?
- Will we be able to go home on the same day as surgery?
- What type of symptoms will occur while healing from surgery?
- When can normal eating resume?
- Are there foods that will be easier to eat or drink?
- Are there foods to avoid?
- What will help with pain after the surgery?
- What if bleeding occurs?
- When can normal activities be resumed?
- How long before full strength is regained?



After the tonsillectomy is complete and you leave the hospital or medical facility, the ENT may prescribe pain medication.¹⁹

Following a tonsillectomy you'll want to:¹⁹

- Rest at home for several days,
 - Avoid vigorous physical activities for up to two weeks,
 - Expect a sore throat and some difficulty swallowing for a few days following surgery,
 - Find softer foods that are easier to eat and swallow
-

Next Steps

HOW DO I FIND AN ENT DOCTOR?

With medical advancements happening every day, it's important to choose a doctor trained in the latest surgical technology.



THE SMITH & NEPHEW MYTONSILS [DOCTOR LOCATOR](#), FOUND ON MYTONSILS.COM, WILL HELP YOU FIND ENT DOCTORS IN YOUR AREA WHO ARE TRAINED TO PERFORM A COBLATION◇ TONSILLECTOMY.

All the ENT doctors listed have the experience and expertise in COBLATION technology to help you make an informed decision about tonsillectomy for you or your child. By going online and entering your zip code, you can find the doctor nearest you.



To learn more about tonsils and tonsillectomy treatment options, visit www.MyTonsils.com.

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