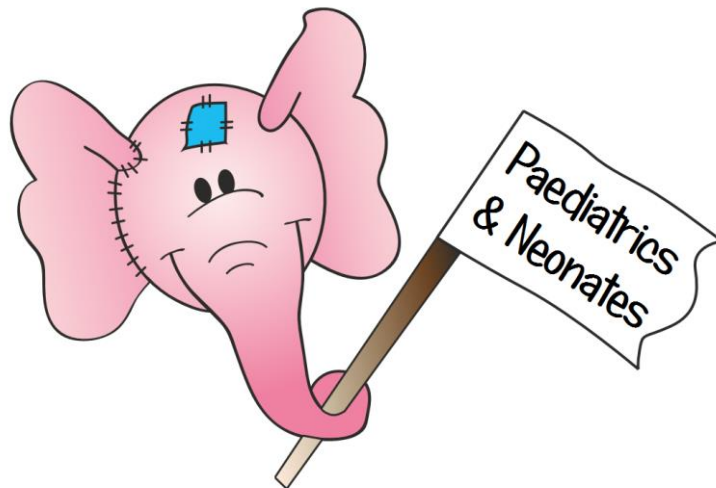


Tonsillitis

Children's Ward

Parent/Carer Information Leaflet



Introduction

Your child has been diagnosed with tonsillitis. We know it can be distressing for parents when their children are unwell or in pain. This leaflet will explain a bit more about tonsillitis to help you understand the condition.

What is tonsillitis?

Tonsillitis means inflammation (swelling) of the tonsils. The tonsils are two glands which are located in the back of the throat. In children they help the body fight off infection. As a child's immune system develops and gets stronger, tonsils become less important and often shrink.

What causes tonsillitis?

Tonsillitis is a very common infection in children.

It is usually caused by a virus, such as the cold or flu virus (influenza). However, sometimes it can be caused by bacteria. The doctors may have mentioned a common type called streptococcus which causes what doctors sometimes call 'strep throat'.

The infection can spread from person to person through coughing, sneezing, hand contact and kissing. Getting your child to wash their hands regularly, and to cough or sneeze into a tissue and throw these away, can help reduce the chance of other people catching it.

What are the symptoms?

Every child is different but they may have one or more of the following symptoms:

- Sore throat – this is the most common symptom
- Difficulty or pain when swallowing, eating or drinking
- Earache
- Headache
- Feeling or being sick

In young children who cannot tell you how they are feeling they may:

- Be irritable or cry more than usual
- Not feed well

You may also notice your child has:

- A high temperature
- Swollen glands in their neck
- White spots of pus at the back of their throat
- A skin rash

What is the treatment?

Most of the time tonsillitis is a mild illness. Although it may be painful and upsetting for your child, it does not need any specific treatment. Antibiotics do not work if the cause is a virus. Your child's immune system, the body's own defence against infection, will fight off the infection.

If the tonsillitis is caused by bacteria and your child has severe symptoms, or they have a weakened immune system, the doctors may prescribe antibiotics such as penicillin to help kill the bacteria.

It is important for your child to take all the days of antibiotics prescribed even if they are feeling better, to make sure the infection is properly treated and to reduce the chances of it coming back.

What can I do to help make my child feel better?

Simple things to help your child feel better include:

- Making sure your child rests and gets plenty of sleep
- Ensuring your child drinks plenty
- Paracetamol or ibuprofen will reduce the pain and paracetamol will help bring a high temperature down, if they can take it (always read the label; do not exceed the recommended dose)
- In older children, gargling salt water may help reduce pain in their throat
- A diet of soft foods may help if your child is having difficulty swallowing

When should I seek further advice?

You should take your child to your GP or ring 111 if they:

- Have such difficulty swallowing, or they cannot drink or swallow saliva (they may dribble excessively)
- Have difficulty breathing
- Have a persistently high temperature
- Are being sick and are unable to keep fluids down
- Have severe pain, especially if it is mainly on one side
- Have symptoms that are still not easing after three to four days

How long will my child be unwell for?

Most children will start to feel better after three to four days and your child should be back to normal after a week or so.

Does my child need their tonsils removed now?

Your child will not need their tonsils removed unless they get lots of troublesome attacks of tonsillitis every year.

If your child gets tonsillitis very regularly, you may wish to discuss the possibility of surgery to have the tonsils removed, and the risks and benefits of this, with your child's GP.

Can I find out more?

You can find out more from the following weblink:

NHS Choices

<http://www.nhs.uk/Conditions/tonsillitis/Pages/Introduction.aspx>

If you have any questions or if there is anything you do not understand about this leaflet, please contact:

Children's Ward on 01384 244271

Russells Hall Hospital switchboard number: 01384 456111

This leaflet can be downloaded or printed from:

<http://dudleygroup.nhs.uk/services-and-wards/c2-childrens-ward/>

If you have any feedback on this patient information leaflet, please email patient.information@dgh.nhs.uk

This leaflet can be made available in large print, audio version and in other languages, please call 0800 073 0510.

للحصول على هذه النشرة بحجم أكبر، وعلى شكل إصدار صوتي و بلغات أخرى، الرجاء الاتصال بالرقم 08000730510.

此宣传单可提供大字版本、音频版本和其它语言版本，请拨打电话：0800 073 0510。

Ulotka dostępna jest również w dużym druku, wersji audio lub w innym języku. W tym celu zadzwoń pod numer 0800 073 0510.

ਇਹ ਪਰਚਾ ਵੱਡੇ ਅੱਖਰਾਂ, ਬੋਲ ਕੇ ਰੀਕਾਰਡ ਕੀਤਾ ਹੋਇਆ ਅਤੇ ਦੂਸਰੀਆਂ ਭਾਸ਼ਾਵਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਵੀ ਪ੍ਰਾਪਤ ਹੋ ਸਕਦਾ ਹੈ, 0800 073 0510 ਤੇ ਫੋਨ ਕਰੋ ਜੀ।

Aceasta brosură poate fi pusă la dispoziție tipărită cu caractere mari, versiune audio sau în alte limbi, pentru acest lucru va rugăm sunați la 0800 073 0510.

یہ کتابچہ آپ کو بڑے حروف کی لکھائی، سمعی صورت اور دیگر زبانوں میں مہیا کیا جا سکتا ہے۔ برائے مہربانی فون نمبر 08000730510 پر رابطہ کریں۔