# Does my child need their tonsils removed?

Video transcript

**[00:00:05]** **A/Prof Gillian Nixon:**

The tonsils and adenoids are tissues in the throat and in the back of the nose. They're part of the body's defense. They're part of the immune system. Their job is to catch bugs and food and things as we breathe and eat that shouldn't be going into the body. Young children can have lots of infections, colds and coughs and sore throats and things and that often raises the question, would they be better off without their tonsils. The other thing is snoring, which again, is quite a common problem in childhood. A lot of children have a little bit of noisiness to their breathing at night because their airway, the throat and the passages are still quite small. Particularly if the tonsils get quite big, then they can actually have more difficulty breathing during sleep and their parents become concerned as they watch them overnight that they're not able to breathe properly or they seem uncomfortable with their breathing.

**[00:00:56]** **Rebekah:**

Maybe 10 months, I think she had her first bout of tonsillitis. It's such a difficult thing for a child at that age because they've got this roaring temperature. You have no idea what it is. You go to a doctor and they've got to try and rule things out. Then they discovered that she did have tonsillitis, and she was on antibiotics for a little while. Around three to four she was on antibiotics probably every six to eight weeks for tonsillitis and it was just constant. It was certainly unsettling to see Dana in pain a lot and to see her needing antibiotics on quite a regular basis. That was a really difficult thing. It wasn't till she was maybe four where I started to say, "you know what, this is out of control", and started asking whether removing her tonsils was an option.

**[00:01:51] Kerryn:**

So Lucy, she got tonsillitis periodically as a child and it would always need an antibiotic to make it better. She tended to go down quite fast when she got sick, but she would respond really quickly too. I had tonsillitis as a child. I grew out of it and so I felt that Lucy would probably grow out of it too. It was probably every year she would get some tonsillitis and I thought, "it's just once a year. She probably doesn't need to have their tonsils out". Eventually, Lucy got a really bad dose of tonsillitis just before she was starting year 11 and Lucy said, "if you're not going to take me, I'm 16 now I'll take myself." I didn't like that she was having to have regular courses of antibiotics. I think that's probably another reason why we decided to have the surgery.

**[00:02:55]** **Xenia:**

It actually started first off with Gregory my second where we noticed sort of coughing and kind of choking sounds overnight and snoring. We thought, well, let's see doctor say what's going on here and it was discovered quite early on with him that he had enlarged tonsils and adenoids and would possibly need surgery. Now years later, we're going through the same thing with Raphaela and some similar symptoms that she's had as well. Her symptoms are the snoring and sleep apnoea. She was stopping breathing at night.

**[00:03:28]** **Erica:**

Ethan was at childcare in kindergarten. A lot of the childcare workers came to me and said, "He's really lethargic. He's really tired and even like at 10:30 o'clock in the morning". The reason why he's so lethargic is probably because he's snoring so much and he's waking himself up at night.

**[00:03:53] [END OF AUDIO]**