# Does my child need their tonsils removed or can I wait?

Video transcript

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

If a family is concerned about snoring or frequent infections in the throat, there are two main things to think about. People often think about having the tonsils and adenoids out as a way of solving the problem. Because that operation's been around for a very long time, everyone knows people that have had it, that's often the first thing that comes to mind.

An equally valid option might be to say, "let's wait and see, the child's growing". We know that many children as they physically get bigger and with time, the problem will improve by itself. If we're at the point of deciding where the surgery might be helpful for a child, then what we're talking about with families is how bad the symptoms are. If the problems are relatively mild, it's the winter they've had a run of colds, that kind of thing, we might decide to wait for a few months and see what happens. Whereas if the problem is much more severe and the child's really struggling to breathe overnight, then that's more likely to lead us down a path of suggesting an operation to help the child.

**[00:01:06]** **Cassie:**

He was showing signs from a young baby before six months, he wouldn't drink and if you'd pick him up, his glands under his arms would be swollen and he was just a miserable baby. He was just stuck. The kid that was always sick, he'd have an ear infection or a throat infection every fortnight at least or every nap he would be snoring loud enough that you could hear it from another room. He'd snore and snore and then kind of stopped almost like an apnoea where breathing really heavily and then start snoring again. That's a bit of a fright.

You definitely know your own child so definitely advocate for their health. Definitely push for further investigation if it's continually happening. I think definitely seeing a specialist or even seeing a doctor for some second advice is really important as well.

**[00:01:55] Shuh:**

He's got very heavy breathing and he's snoring even though when he's just a newborn. We asked the doctor and the doctor said maybe his airway was just narrower than other babies because he's a premature baby and he would just grow out of it. He didn't grow out of it. He just continued to be like this.

**[00:02:17]** **John:**

On a day to day basis, he would just have runny nose. It was so hard, he breathes so heavily like Darth Vader. Even at night-time when he slept, it was so hard because he would be unsettled but he didn't have good sleep until he had that operation.

**[00:02:34]** **Shuh:**

Before surgery, because of his suffering with this thing and with a breathing problem, he's always grumpy. He had a lot of tantrums and we don't know why. At first, I was in denial. I hope he would just grow out of it because he's too young for surgery. The doctors say to us, "if you're not comfortable, you can just think about it" but she suggested that we “do as soon as possible because in his case, it's quite severe”. After one week and we saw him really suffer and we thought, we just put our trust in the doctor and we just go ahead with it.

**[00:03:18] Xenia:**

Her symptoms are the snoring and the sleep apnoea so she was sort of stopping breathing at night and we trialed the nasal spray for six weeks and saw big improvements which has been really good.

I think having seen the older two go through surgery and seeing how much better it's been for them, I'm comfortable going ahead with surgery if I have to, which is a good thing. There's not that fear of the unknown with Raphaela. I'm also happy to watch and wait too and because we have seen some benefits because of this nasal spray that we've used, I think then that I am more comfortable watching and waiting with her, but certainly when we see the doctor, I'll have that discussion.

Asking questions I think is the key. Definitely going in and asking questions, not being afraid to ask questions when you see doctors, I think that's a really important one because this is your child. Sometimes I think that parents may be a little bit frightened to question doctors, but never be afraid.

**[00:04:24] [END OF AUDIO]**