

# Policy for Adenoidectomy

## Category: Restricted

### Adenoids

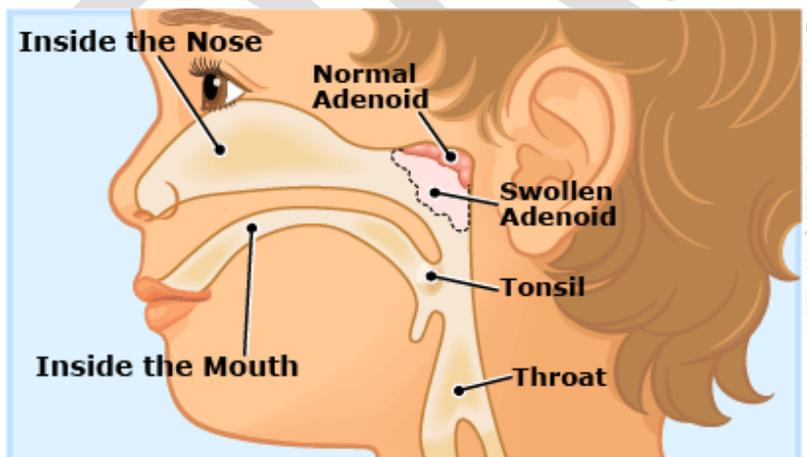
Adenoids are small lumps of tissue at the back of the nose, above the roof of the mouth. They are part of the immune system and produce white blood cells to help fight infections and viruses that get trapped when breathed in or swallowed.

Babies and children have adenoids. The adenoids start to shrink from around age five years and practically disappear by the late teens. In rare circumstances adults may have enlarged adenoids.

Adenoids can become swollen for a while when fighting a bacterial or viral infection and block the nasal passage. This swelling does get better, however sometimes the adenoids can become enlarged and cause:

- a constant runny nose
- difficulty breathing through the nose
- difficulty sleeping
- constant ear infections.

This may result in the adenoids being removed.



### Adenoidectomy

Adenoidectomy is a short operation carried out under general anaesthetic to remove the adenoids. The surgeon will remove the adenoids by scraping them away or by applying heat using a diathermy instrument. A diathermy instrument produces high-frequency electrical currents that burn the adenoids.

## Risks

After an adenoidectomy, some children experience minor health problems. However, most of these are temporary and rarely require further treatment. They can include: sore throat, earache, stiff jaw, blocked nose, bad breath and change in voice (may sound like they are speaking through their nose).

## Eligibility criteria

Adenoidectomy is a restricted procedure. It will only be funded if other conservative treatments have not worked and the patient meets one of the following criteria:

- difficulty sleeping, may start to snore or develop irregular breathing during sleep and excessive sleepiness during the day
- OR
- recurrent or constant problems with ear infections
- OR
- recurrent or constant sinusitis including symptoms such as a frequent runny nose, facial pain and nasal-sounding speech.

This means the patient's NHS commissioning organisation (CCG), who is responsible for buying healthcare services on behalf of patients, will **only** fund the treatment if an Individual Funding Request (IFR) application has shown exceptional clinical need and the CCG supports this.

## Advice and guidance

For more information and guidance search 'adenoids' at [www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk)