

Your Child's Health

Dispelling The Myths of Tonsillectomies *Medical Myth vs. Fact*

(NAPSA)—School vacations may mean a break for kids, but for ear, nose and throat surgeons they mark “tonsillectomy season,” the time of year when most tonsillectomies are performed.

However, a recent survey shows that most parents mistakenly believe that tonsillectomies are outdated, painful and primarily performed to treat tonsillitis rather than childhood sleep disorders such as snoring or sleep apnea. Conducted by the American Academy of Otolaryngology—Head and Neck Surgery, the survey found five major misconceptions among parents:

Myth: Doctors don't remove tonsils anymore. **Fact:** Approximately 600,000 tonsillectomies are performed each year for children and adults. It is the second-most common childhood surgery.

Myth: Tonsils are mainly removed for chronic sore throats and tonsillitis. **Fact:** Three-fourths of all tonsillectomies today are performed for enlarged tonsils causing an obstructive sleep disorder, such as pediatric sleep apnea.

Myth: A child will be in pain for up to two weeks after a tonsillectomy. **Fact:** More advanced technologies, such as Coblation®, use lower temperatures and have been shown in research to reduce recovery time and pain after surgery compared to older, heat-based technology such as electrocautery.

Myth: Children can eat only ice cream after having their tonsils removed. **Fact:** One-half of all parents believe eating ice cream is the best way to recover from a tonsillectomy. Sixty-nine percent of parents whose children have not had their tonsils removed believe it takes children seven or more days to return to a normal diet. Today's more advanced meth-



Tonsillectomies entail less pain and shorter recovery times than ever before.

ods of tonsillectomy, such as Coblation, speed a child's return to normal diet—three times faster on average.

Myth: Tonsillectomies have been performed the same way for decades. **Fact:** While older, high-temperature technologies are still used to perform tonsillectomies, the advent of low-temperature technology in the last several years is improving outcomes for thousands of children.

According to Dr. David Walner, pediatric ear, nose and throat specialist, and assistant professor of otolaryngology at Rush University Medical Center, Chicago, advanced tonsillectomy procedures such as Coblation, use lower temperatures, so the pain and recovery time are far less than with traditional technologies.

“I find that many parents are uninformed about tonsillectomy, and knowing the facts can help them make a better choice for their child,” Walner said. “The advanced Coblation procedure is making tonsillectomies more comfortable for children and less stressful for parents.”

For more information about tonsillectomies and advanced treatment visit www.tonsilfacts.org.