



## Tonsillitis

### Diagnostic Plan

History  
Physical examination  
Examination of the tonsils  
Culture of the tonsils  
Cytologic study of the tonsillar exudates  
X-rays

### Therapeutic Plan

Elimination of the cause  
Antibacterials  
Tonsillectomy

### Nutritional Plan

Nutrition based on overall patient evaluation including body condition and other organ system involvement  
A soft food may minimize postsurgical pain

## Tonsillitis

Your pet has tonsillitis. Tonsillitis is an inflammation of the lymph tissue in the throat. Common clinical signs include retching, coughing, vomiting, anorexia, and weight loss. It is usually treated with antibiotics and medications for pain relief or, in severe persistent cases, with tonsillectomy. This client education sheet will help you learn more about tonsillitis and will review your veterinarian's instructions for your pet's care at home, as well as follow-up with the veterinary health care team.

### What You Should Know About Tonsillitis

The tonsils are two structures found in the throats of dogs and cats. They belong to the lymphatic system and serve as part of the body's defense mechanism against organisms such as viruses and bacteria. In normal animals, the tonsils are found in a fold of tissue that forms a crypt in the throat. Tonsillitis is an inflammation of the tonsils.

#### Causes

Many cases of tonsillitis are caused by bacterial infections of the throat. Other causes include grass seeds that may lodge in the tonsillar crypts, bronchitis, tumors of the stomach, an enlarged esophagus, and spasms of the muscle that allows food to pass from the stomach to the intestine.

#### Diagnosis

Tonsillitis is diagnosed by your veterinarian when he or she examines your pet's throat. The tonsils are often enlarged and are no longer contained within their crypts. They appear red, and the surrounding tissues in the throat may be inflamed. Small splotches of blood or pus may be seen on the surface of the tonsil. Cultures of the tonsils are useful for diagnosing bacterial infections.

Your veterinarian may question you closely about any signs you may have noticed that would indicate the presence of another disease that is causing your pet's tonsillitis. X-rays of the throat, chest, and stomach may be taken to look for abnormalities such as foreign bodies, lung disease, and stomach disorders. Occasionally, your veterinarian may use a special instrument called an endoscope to inspect the lining of the lungs and stomach when a disease is suspected here.

### Treatment and Home Care

Many cases of tonsillitis respond to antibiotic therapy and mild medication for pain. Severe, recurrent, or persistent cases may require a tonsillectomy (removal of the tonsils) if treatment with medication fails.

Tonsillitis that is caused by another disease often resolves after the disease is treated. For example, removing grass seeds from the tonsillar crypts or treating stomach problems that cause vomiting may eliminate the tonsillitis.

Home care consists of following your veterinarian's instructions for giving prescribed medications and for returning to the hospital for scheduled follow-up appointments.

### Nutritional Plan

If your pet has tonsillitis, your veterinarian may suggest a dietary change based on your pet's age and body condition, and on the presence or absence of disease in other organs and body systems. If your pet has had a tonsillectomy your veterinarian may give you special feeding instructions. Surgical patients may benefit from foods with increased levels of protein and energy during the recovery process. Such foods include Hill's® Prescription Diet® Canine p/d® and Feline p/d®.

After your pet's recovery is complete, your veterinarian may recommend another dietary change. Optimal nutrition provides for a pet's needs based on age and activity level, but more important, it reduces the health risks associated with feeding excess sodium, calcium, phosphorus, protein, and calories. Foods that avoid these harmful excesses and provide proper nutrition include Hill's® Science Diet® brand pet foods for dogs and cats.

### Transitioning Food

Unless recommended otherwise by your veterinarian, gradually introduce any new food over a seven-day period. Mix the new food with your pet's former food, gradually increasing its proportion until only the new food is fed.

If your pet is one of the few that doesn't readily accept a new food, try warming the canned food to body temperature, hand feeding for the first few days, or mixing the dry food with warm water (wait ten minutes before serving). However, do not add water to your cat's food. Feed only the recommended food. Do not feed additional salt or any snacks that may contain sodium. Be patient but firm with your pet.

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## Home Care Instructions

Client's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Patient's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Medication(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Nutritional Recommendation: \_\_\_\_\_

Follow-Up Appointment: \_\_\_\_\_

(Hospital Stamp Area Above)

REGULAR VISITS WILL HELP OUR VETERINARY HEALTH CARE TEAM PROVIDE FOR YOUR PET'S BEST INTEREST.