

Does adenoideotomy help prevent further recurrences of otitis media with effusion in children?

Clinical Question	How effective and safe is adenoideotomy, either alone or in combination with ventilation tubes (grommets), for otitis media with effusion (OME) in children?
Bottom Line	Adenoideotomy may have a small beneficial effect on the resolution of OME - fewer children who received adenoideotomy had persistent effusion at up to three months (low-certainty evidence) and up to 12 months of follow-up (very low-certainty evidence). For those that received adenoideotomy and ventilation tubes vs no treatment there was an improvement in mean hearing threshold but the evidence was very uncertain. This effect was much smaller after one and two years of follow-up, but it should be noted that many children in the control group had also received surgery by this time.
Caveat	There is a chance of haemorrhage from adenoideotomy, but the absolute risk of this is likely to be small, and the evidence was very uncertain. It is important to note that many of the included studies were undertaken several years ago. Since then, environmental risk factors for OME may have changed which in turn may have affected the relative influence of adenoid function on the development of OME, meaning the corresponding impact of adenoideotomy may be altered in children with OME today. Therefore, these results may not be fully applicable to current practice.
Context	OME is an accumulation of fluid in the middle ear cavity, common amongst young children. The fluid may cause hearing loss. When persistent, it may lead to developmental delay, social difficulty and poor quality of life. Management of OME includes watchful waiting, autoinflation, medical and surgical treatment. Adenoideotomy has often been used as a potential treatment for this condition.
Cochrane Systematic Review	MacKeith S, Mulvaney CA, Galbraith K, Webster KE, Paing A, Connolly R, Marom T, Daniel M, Venekamp RP, Schilder AGM. Adenoideotomy for otitis media with effusion (OME) in children. Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews 2023, Issue 10. Art. No.: CD015252. DOI: 10.1002/14651858.CD015252.pub2. This review contains 10 trials with a total of 1,785 participants.

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Systematic review link:

<https://www.cochranelibrary.com/cdsr/doi/10.1002/14651858.CD015252.pub2/full>