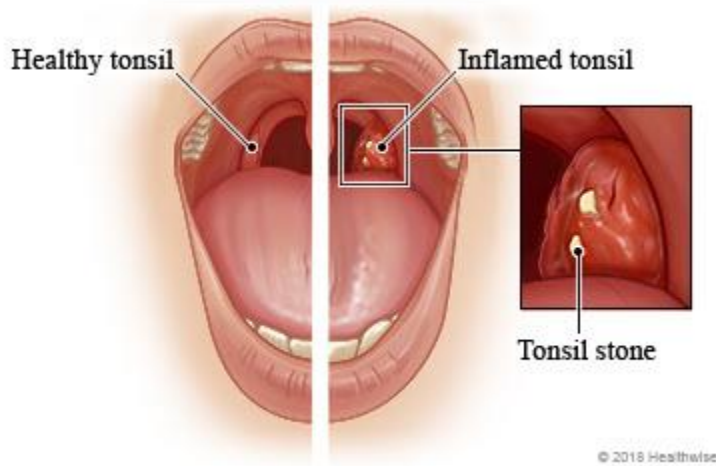


# Tonsil Stones: Care Instructions



## Overview

---

Your tonsils are areas of tissue in the back of your throat. They are part of the immune system, which helps your body fight infection. Tonsil tissue has small gaps in it. Tonsil stones form when bacteria and debris get stuck in those gaps and harden.

Tonsil stones look like white or yellow pebbles on your tonsils. They can cause bad breath, a sore throat, a bad taste in your mouth, and ear pain. Or they may not cause any symptoms.

Usually, tonsil stones can be treated at home. But large stones that cause pain or other problems may have to be removed by a doctor. And if your tonsil stones keep coming back or are bothering you a lot, your doctor may recommend removing your tonsils.

**Follow-up care is a key part of your treatment and safety.** Be sure to make and go to all appointments, and call your doctor if you are having problems. It's also a good idea to know your test results and keep a list of the medicines you take.

## How can you care for yourself at home?

---

- Gargle with warm salt water. This helps reduce swelling and discomfort. It might also help remove the stones. Gargle with 1 teaspoon of salt mixed in 8 fluid ounces of warm water.
- Use something soft to gently remove tonsil stones that bother you. Some people use the end of a cotton swab.
- Practice good oral hygiene. Brush and floss your teeth regularly.

## When should you call for help?

---



Watch closely for changes in your health, and be sure to contact your doctor if:

- Your tonsil stones keep coming back, or they really bother you and you want to talk about other options.
- You do not get better as expected.