

## Tonsil Stones

### What are tonsil stones?

Tonsil stones are small lumps of hard material that form in the tonsils. Tonsil stones are usually not painful or harmful but they can cause bad breath. They are also called tonsilloliths (TON-sill-uh-liths).

### What are the symptoms of tonsil stones?

Some tonsil stones do not cause any symptoms. If you do have symptoms, they may include:

- Bad breath (halitosis [HAL-uh-toe-sis])
- Cough
- Earache
- Feeling that something is stuck in your throat
- Sore throat
- Small white or yellow stones in your throat that you may spit up
- Throat infections that are hard to treat with antibiotics

### How are tonsil stones diagnosed?

Tonsil stones are diagnosed when a doctor or dentist sees them while looking at your throat. They may be seen on an x-ray or scan that you are having for a different reason.

### What is the treatment for tonsil stones?

Tonsil stones usually fall out on their own without treatment. You can try to help dislodge the stones

by brushing your teeth regularly and gargling with warm salt water (one teaspoon of salt mixed with eight ounces of water). You do not need antibiotics.

### Would having my tonsils taken out stop me from getting tonsil stones?

If tonsil stones are bothering you, talk to your doctor. They may refer you to an ear, nose, and throat doctor. They can discuss the next steps of treatment, which may include surgery.

### How can I prevent tonsil stones?

- Brush and floss regularly. Make sure to brush the front and back of your tongue.
- Gargle with salt water after eating

### Where can I get more information?

Your doctor

Cleveland Clinic

<https://my.clevelandclinic.org/health/diseases/21505-tonsil-stones>

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