

Uvula Removal Surgery

What is a uvula removal surgery?

The **uvula** (YOO-vyuh-luh) is the tissue that hangs down at the back of your throat. Having it removed can help open your airway and reduce vibrations when you breathe in and out. It can help to reduce snoring and other symptoms of obstructive sleep apnea (OSA).

If have not already had your tonsils removed, they will also be removed during this surgery.

Why do I need this?

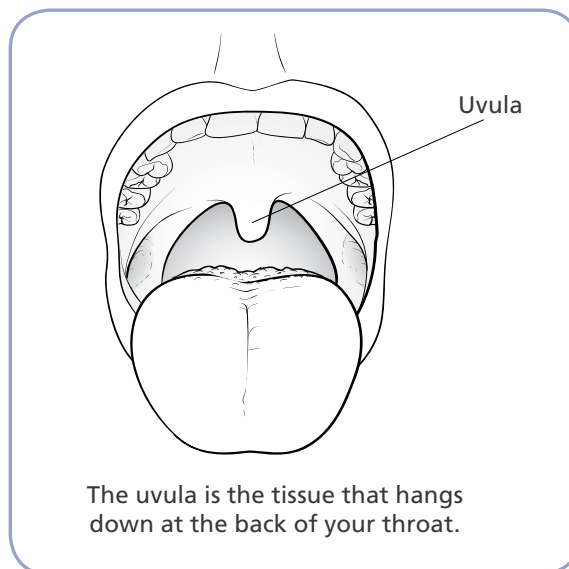
Your doctor may recommend removing your uvula for these reasons:

- To reduce snoring
- To help reduce some symptoms related to obstructive sleep apnea (OSA)
- To remove tissues that restrict the airway

What are the risks?

Some people may experience some of the risks below. Your healthcare providers can help you treat them.

- Pain
- Bleeding, infection, and swelling of the throat
- Severe sore throat
- Nausea and vomiting
- Acid reflux (rare)
- Scar tissue that may narrow the airway (very rare)



How do I prepare?

You are likely to have a severe sore throat after the surgery. Recovery can be difficult.

- Once you know the date of your surgery, plan to spend a few days at home recovering. Ask a family member or friend to care for you during this time.
- Your doctor will give you specific instructions on how to prepare for the surgery. You may be asked to stop taking some of your home medicines before your procedure.
- The surgical facility will contact you a day or two before your surgery. They will give you specific instructions on **when you need to stop eating and drinking** the night before your surgery.

It is very important to follow the instructions given by both your doctor and surgical facility.

How long do I need to be at the facility?

You will be given general anesthesia so you sleep and don't feel anything during the surgery. You will need to stay in the facility at least several hours to recover from anesthesia.

Some people can go home the same day of surgery. Others may spend the night in the facility so their healthcare providers can keep an eye on them. You can ask your surgeon what you should expect.

What should I expect after the surgery?

After the surgery, you'll feel some side effects for several days. You should be back to normal within a few weeks. These are some side effects you might have:

- Sore throat
- Trouble swallowing
- Nausea and vomiting
- Bad breath
- Ear pain
- Slight fever (less than 101°F)
- Blood in your saliva (after 10 to 14 days when the scabs fall off)
- White patches of skin over the surgery site
- Constipation, which can be caused by pain medicine

You may be able to feel some stitches in the back of your throat. The stitches will dissolve over time on their own.

How do I care for myself at home?

- Drink a lot of clear liquids to keep from getting too dry. Keep with plain things like water, herbal tea, or ice pops. Avoid citrus juices because the acid may irritate your throat.
- Eat soft foods. Avoid foods that may irritate your throat such as chips, crackers, nuts, raw fruit and vegetables, greasy or fatty foods, and popcorn. Slowly return to your normal diet.
- Take your pain medicine exactly as prescribed. Your pain may get worse over the first few days after surgery as your throat begins to heal. Sometimes, this can cause constipation. Drinking plenty of fluids and eating foods high in fiber can help prevent this.
- Keeping your throat moist and using a humidifier may feel good in the first few days.
- Plan to rest and recover. Don't do difficult activities for 2 weeks.
- Ask your doctor when you can return to work or school.

When should I call my doctor?

You will be asked to schedule a follow up appointment with your provider within the first 2 weeks after surgery.

Contact your doctor right away if you experience any of the following:

- Vomiting, spitting, or coughing bright red blood
- Trouble breathing
- Fever of 101°F or higher
- Chills that last more than 12 hours
- Nausea or vomiting that does not stop
- Pain you cannot control

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