

Pacific Eye and Ear Pacific Head and Neck

S P E C I A L I S T S

Coblation Technology for Tonsil Removal (Tonsillectomy)

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Hearing, Balance, Facial Nerve
Ear and Skull Base Surgery
Adults and Children

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Hearing Aids
Children and Adults

Coblation technology has been used in over 1 million surgical procedures worldwide in specialties such as ear, nose, and throat (ENT) surgery, general surgery, arthroscopic surgery, neurosurgery, and cosmetic surgery for the removal of soft tissue. Coblation is a unique, targeted method of tissue removal that uses radiofrequency (RF) energy. Unlike other forms of electrical surgery, Coblation produces very little heat, minimizing damage to the adjacent tissue.

The Coblation Process

Most radiofrequency electrosurgical techniques use a heat driven process to ablate or cut tissue. High amounts of energy are discharged into tissue causing tissue structures to explode at high temperatures. During this process, surrounding tissue can be inadvertently charred or burned. The Coblation process, in contrast, is a controlled, non-heat driven process. With Coblation technology, radio-frequency (RF) energy is applied to a conductive medium (usually saline), causing a highly focused plasma field to form around the energized electrodes. The plasma field is comprised of highly ionized particles. These ionized particles have sufficient energy to break organic molecular bonds within tissue. The by-products of this non-heat driven process are elementary molecules and low molecular weight inert gases. Instead of exploding tissue, Coblation causes a low temperature molecular disintegration. The result is volumetric removal of target tissue with minimal damage to surrounding tissue.

Dr. Griffiths has used Coblation technology to remove the tonsils in over 100 patients to date. There have been no adverse complications. But to the contrary, the patient satisfaction has been remarkable. There is a significant in the duration and intensity of the pain following tonsillectomy with Coblation. Many patients can eat the following day or at least by the 3rd day after surgery, which is generally not the case with traditional tonsillectomy.

Traditional Tonsillectomy removes the tonsil tissue and the tonsil capsule. This leave the throat muscle exposed to saliva and food. This “raw” surface is the source of the pain. This exposure increases the risk for bleeding from the “open, raw muscle wound.”

The downside of Coblation is the retention of some tonsil tissue on the capsule. In order to leave the capsule in place, some buds of tonsil may remained attached. This is a minor concern as 95-97% of the tonsil tissue is removed. The likelihood that the diseased tissue remains is low.

Due to the Coblation Tonsillectomy Advantages of:

1. Decreased pain 2. Earlier eating and swallowing 3. Decreased risk of bleeding 4. Faster recovery

Dr. Griffiths considers the use of Coblation technology for the majority of his patients undergoing Tonsillectomy. Dr. Griffiths has been on the PBS show: “In Focus”: discussing the Coblation Procedure.

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