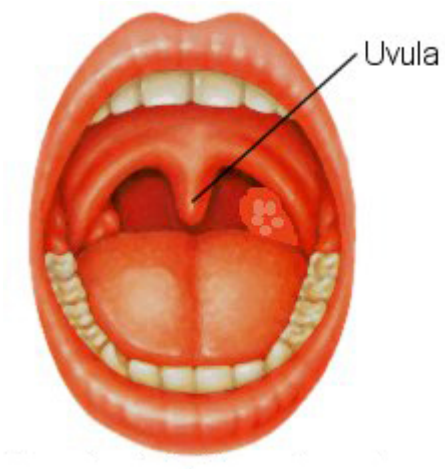
Peritonsillar Abscess

Peritonsillar abscess is a collection of pus in the back of the throat. This pus forms behind the tonsils. The treatment is most often drainage. This is done by:

- Putting a needle into the abscess
- Cutting and draining the abscess.

Then antibiotics are given.



HOME CARE

- If your abscess was drained today:
  - Gargle with warm salt water.
  - Gargle 4 times per day or as needed for comfort. Do not swallow this mixture.
  - Mix 1 teaspoon of salt in 8 ounces of warm water for gargling.
- Rest in bed as needed.
- Return to your normal activity as soon as you can.
- Apply cold to your neck for pain relief. Fill a plastic bag with ice. Wrap the bag in a towel. Hold this to your neck. Do this for 20 minutes 4 times per day.
- Eat a soft or liquid diet. Drink cold fluids. Cold fluids will:
  - Soothe.
  - Take the swelling down.
- Only take over-the-counter or prescription medicines for pain, discomfort, or fever as directed by your doctor. Do not use aspirin unless directed by your doctor.
- Take antibiotics as directed.

GET HELP IF:

- You have pain that gets worse.
- You have pain, swelling, redness, or drainage in your throat.
- A temperature above 102° F (38.9° C) develops, or as your doctor suggests.
- You develop signs of infection such as dizziness, headache, low energy, or a general feeling of illness.
- You have difficulty breathing, swallowing or eating.
- You have signs of dehydration (lightheadedness when standing, peeing less, a fast heart rate, or dry mouth and nose).

GET HELP RIGHT AWAY IF:

- You are coughing up or throwing up blood.
- You develop more severe throat pain that pain medicine does not control.
- You start to drool.
- You develop problems breathing or talking.
- You find it easier to breathe while leaning forward.

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