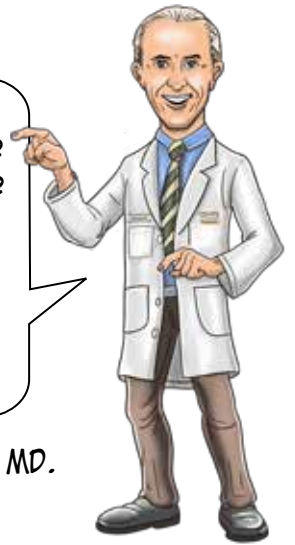




# Washington University in St. Louis

It's important to work with a healthcare professional to determine the underlying cause and appropriate treatment plan for tonsillitis. Left untreated or undertreated, tonsillitis can lead to complications, such as abscesses, rheumatic fever, or kidney inflammation.



Jay F. Piccirillo, MD.



**Diagnosis:** Tonsillitis is a condition that causes inflammation and swelling of the tonsils, which are located in the back of the throat. The diagnosis of tonsillitis typically involves a physical examination of the throat, including an evaluation of the tonsils, as well as a medical history and review of any accompanying symptoms.

In some cases, additional tests may be done to determine the underlying cause of tonsillitis. These tests may include a throat swab to check for bacterial or viral infections, blood tests to evaluate for strep throat or other infections, or imaging tests, such as a CT scan or ultrasound, to evaluate for abscesses or other complications.

**Management:** The management of tonsillitis depends on the underlying cause and severity of symptoms. Here are some common treatments for various causes of tonsillitis:

**1. Bacterial tonsillitis:** If tonsillitis is caused by a bacterial infection, such as strep throat, antibiotics may be prescribed to treat the infection and prevent complications. It's important to complete the full course of antibiotics as directed by a healthcare professional, even if symptoms improve.

**2. Viral tonsillitis:** Viral tonsillitis typically resolves on its own within a week or two. Treatment may focus on managing symptoms, such as pain and fever, with over-the-counter medications, such as acetaminophen or ibuprofen, and staying hydrated.

**3. Recurrent tonsillitis:** If tonsillitis is recurrent and causing significant discomfort or complications, a healthcare professional may recommend a tonsillectomy, which is a surgical procedure to remove the tonsils.

In addition to medical treatment, self-care measures, such as getting plenty of rest, staying hydrated, and avoiding irritants, such as cigarette smoke, can help manage symptoms of tonsillitis.

