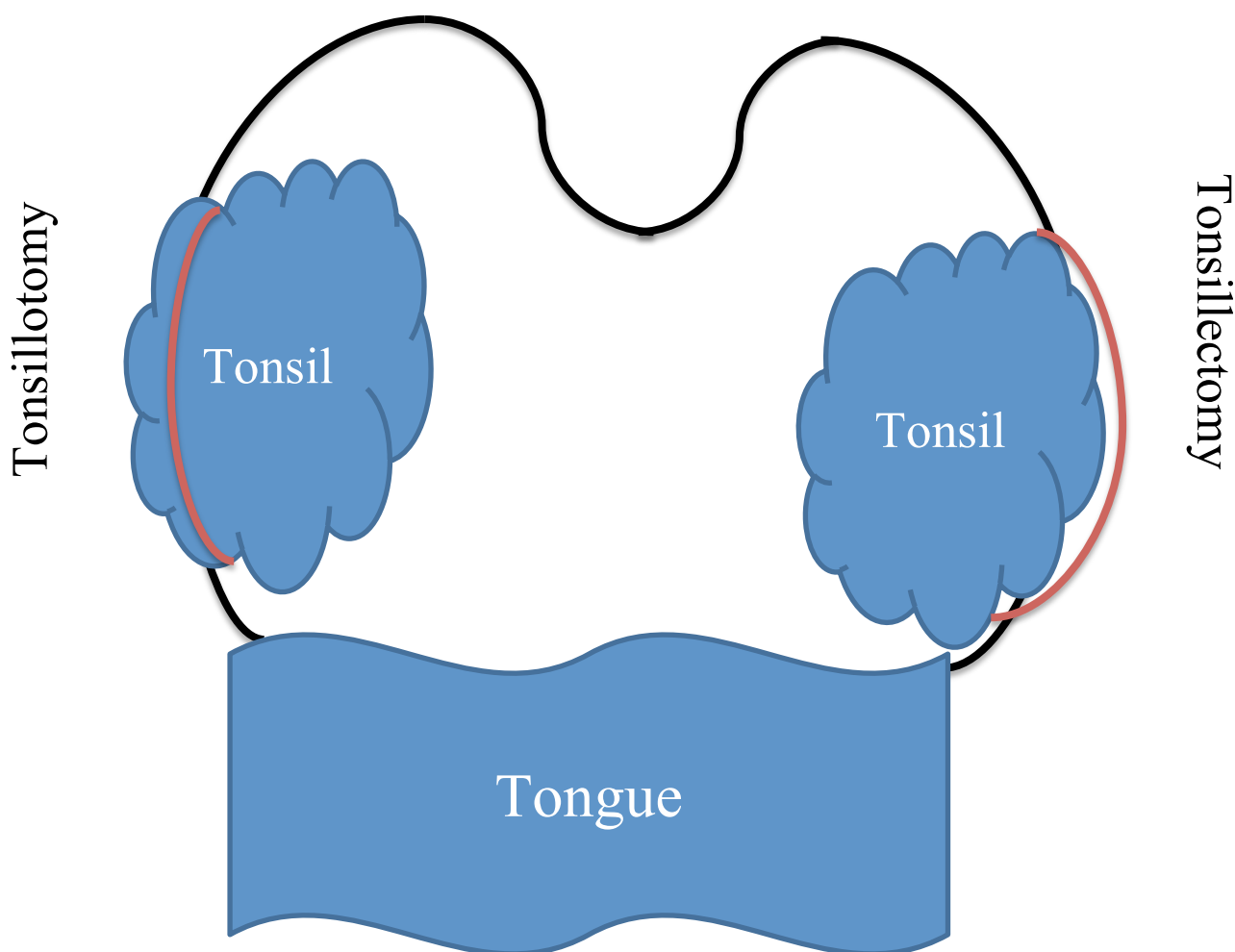


Tonsillotomy vs Tonsillectomy in Children

Tonsillotomy is the partial removal of most (approximately 95%) but not all the tonsil tissue as shown in the diagram.

Tonsillectomy is removal of all the tonsil tissue but dissecting outside the capsule of the tonsil as shown in the diagram.



For sleep disordered breathing and obstructive tonsil symptoms then tonsillotomy is just as effective as tonsillectomy as these diagnoses are a reflection of the size of the tonsils and adenoids.

The advantages of performing a tonsillotomy are reduced post operation pain and reduced risk of post operation bleeding as the tonsil capsule with its nerve endings and blood vessels are not disrupted.

The benefits of this has been shown in many studies now and are listed below:

- reduced pain.
- reduced secondary haemorrhage rate.
- earlier return to school.
- reduced pain medication use.
- reduced return to hospital rate.
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The potential disadvantage is the remnant tonsil tissue (5%) may allow tonsillitis in the future although this chance is thought to be very low. If it was to happen then tonsillectomy, removing all the remaining tonsil tissue can be performed at any age in the future.