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Having your tonsils out could soon become a lot less painful

Children having their tonsils out in hospital would have a speedier recovery and fewer complications under a new trial exploring best recovery options that reduce complications.

About 50,000 tonsillectomies – the most common childhood surgical procedure – are performed each year in Australia. Some young patients can take up to three weeks to recover from the procedure.

In an address to the annual scientific meeting of the Australian and New Zealand College of Anaesthetists (ANZCA) on Monday 6 May, Brisbane paediatric anaesthetist Associate Professor Paul Lee-Archer says recovery from a tonsillectomy can be distressing for both the child and their families.

“Families often face challenges such as unplanned days off work, visits to emergency departments, and consultations with general practitioners due to post-operative complications.

“Additionally, children may miss valuable school time during their recovery.”

Associate Professor Lee-Archer, a staff specialist at the Queensland Children’s Hospital, is leading the trial which will allow researchers to assess various surgical and anaesthetic techniques, with the aim of identifying the most effective strategies for enhancing recovery and reducing complications.

“There are many different surgical and anaesthetic techniques, however we still don’t know the best combination of these to ensure the best recovery for children and their families.”

“What is needed is a large-scale study and an innovative trial design involving anaesthetists and ear, nose and throat surgeons that can provide definitive answers to improve the recovery process for children undergoing tonsillectomies,” he says.

More than 2000 anaesthetists and specialist pain medicine physicians from Australia, New Zealand, the US, the UK, Ireland, Hong Kong and Malaysia are attending the annual scientific meeting at the Brisbane Convention Centre.

ANZCA is responsible for the training, examination and specialist accreditation of anaesthetists and pain medicine specialists and for the standards of clinical practice in Australia and New Zealand.

For more information or to request interviews please contact ANZCA Media Manager Carolyn Jones on +61 408 259 369 or cjones@anzca.edu.au