



Salivary Gland Infections and Salivary Stones (Sialadenitis and Sialithiasis)

What is Sialadenitis and Sialithiasis?

Sialadenitis is an infection of the salivary glands that causes painful swelling of the glands that produce saliva, or spit. Bacterial infections, diabetes, tumors or stones in the salivary glands, and tooth problems (poor oral hygiene) may cause a salivary gland infection. The symptoms include pain, swelling, pus in the mouth, neck skin infection. These infections affect the submandibular gland (below the jaw) or the parotid glands (in front of the ears). The symptoms can be minor and just be a small swelling after meals (symptoms tend to be worse after times of high saliva flow). Rarely, the swelling in the mouth will progress and can cut off your airway and cause you to stop breathing.

What Causes Sialadenitis and Sialithiasis

When the flow of saliva is blocked by a small stone (sialolithiasis) in a salivary gland or when a person is dehydrated, bacteria can build up and cause an infection. A viral infection, such as the mumps, also can cause a salivary gland to get infected and swell. These infections can also be caused by a spread from rotten or decaying teeth. Sometimes there can be a buildup of calcium in the saliva ducts that form into stones. These can easily stop the flow of saliva and cause problems

How are these infections and stones treated?

Treatment depends on what caused your salivary gland infection. If the infection is caused by bacteria, your doctor may prescribe antibiotics. Home treatment such as drinking fluids, applying warm compresses, and sucking on lemon wedges or sour candy to increase saliva may help to clear the infection quicker. If a salivary stone is causing recurring infections, there are many procedural and operative options to discuss with your physician or see our website for further information. If you get an infection, please see your physician as soon as possible.

If you get swelling again,

- Please drink lots of fluid throughout the day. 8-10 8oz glasses of water per day and avoid caffeine
- Take lemon wedges or sour candy 3 times daily
- Three times a day, use a warm compress against the area where the swelling shows up.
- Right after each warm compress, firmly massage from back to the front along the area of swelling. Do 3 passes of massage after each compress.