

**Southwest Virginia ENT &
Facial Plastics**

**Sialoadenitis & Sialolithiasis
(Blocked Salivary Glands)**

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Your doctor has diagnosed you with sialoadenitis and/or sialolithiasis. This means you have swelling and inflammation in the salivary glands, usually due to blockage of ducts which carry saliva out of the glands. You have four main glands which can be affected: The parotid glands (in the cheeks in front of and under the ear), and the submandibular glands (under the middle part of the jaw). As mentioned above, this painful problem occurs when the flow of saliva out of the glands becomes blocked. When this blockage occurs, the affected gland swells, get firm, and become painful. If this is associated with infection, redness along with increased pain, swelling and fevers may occur. Sometimes the blockage is caused by tiny stones and/or "sludging" of the saliva. In other cases, the problem is caused by stones. This is analogous to kidney stones which block the flow of urine out of the kidneys. Sometimes these salivary stones can be seen in the mouth, other times they must be visualized with x-rays or ultrasound. The presence of these stones is called sialolithiasis.

Most of the time, this type of problem can be treated conservatively with the following measures:

- Use hot compresses 3 or more times/day
- Good hydration: Drink plenty of water and avoid non-prescription diuretics like caffeine and alcohol.
- Sialogogues: Anything sour will help your body create more saliva which will help expel the sludge or stones from your blocked off spit glands. Eat something sour every hour while you are awake. "Ice Breaker Sours" are sour, sugar free candies which you can find at most stores.
- Sometimes antibiotics are helpful. Your doctor will prescribe them if indicated.

Most cases of sialoadenitis will resolve with the above treatment. Sometimes surgery is indicated if a problem doesn't respond or keep recurring despite medical treatment. People with sialolithiasis are more likely to require surgery, as they tend to develop recurrence of the stones. Even if you do not have stones, you may experience a recurrence of the sialoadenitis. If this occurs, start the above conservative treatments immediately. This may help abort the attack. You can and should call for an appointment as well if the symptoms do not resolve quickly.

Please do not hesitate to call if you have any additional questions or problems.