Tonsil stones, also known as tonsiliths, are clusters of calcified material that form in the crevices of the tonsils. The stones form when bacteria and other materials such as food, dead cells, and mucus harden.

These stones may feel like foreign objects lodged in the tonsils. The stones are a nuisance and are sometimes hard to remove, but are usually not harmful. They are frequently the cause of bad breath.

Symptoms of Tonsil Stones:
- Bad breath
- Sore throat
- Whitish debris in the back of the throat
- Difficulty swallowing (depending on the size of the stones)
- Ear pain
- Tonsil swelling

Treatment of Tonsil Stones:
- Salt water gargles:
  Gargling with salt water (1 tsp of salt in 8oz of warm water) twice per day can decrease the bacterial counts and help clear debris from the tonsil

- Irrigation:
  This is the simplest and most effective way to remove tonsil stones. Use of an oral irrigator, such as a simple Water Pik, allows for the crevices of the tonsils to be rinsed of any stones and foreign material. Rinsing twice per day is a highly effective treatment for the tonsil stones.

- Surgical removal:
  In some cases the tonsil stones cause enough problems to warrant a tonsillectomy. Generally all conservative measures are tried prior to considering a tonsillectomy. Tonsillectomy is a definitive treatment for tonsil stones as without ones tonsils, stones cannot form. Laser resurfacing, subtotal tonsillectomy, intracapsular tonsillectomy and radiofrequency tonsil ablation are all surgical alternatives but also leave tonsil tissue behind, allowing reformation of the tonsil crypts and stones.