



# Laryngoscopy

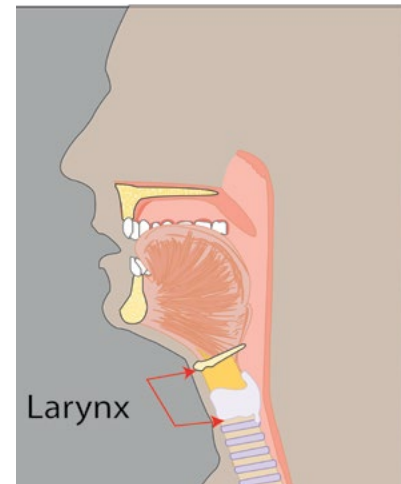
## Information for patients from Head and Neck

This leaflet explains the different ways in which your voice box and vocal cords can be examined.

### What is a Laryngoscopy?

Laryngoscopy is a procedure that's main purpose is to examine the larynx (voice box) and vocal cords, for movement and to diagnose/exclude disease.

It also allows treatment such as removing nodules or foreign bodies (objects accidentally inhaled).



### What types of Laryngoscopy are available?

- **Indirect Laryngoscopy** is usually performed by a doctor in an outpatient or emergency clinic with a mirror. A local anaesthetic spray may be used to numb the area. There are no side effects and the treatment does not hurt. This procedure allows your doctor to examine how your voice box and vocal cords move.
- **Fibreoptic Laryngoscopy** will be performed in an outpatient or emergency clinic by a doctor or experienced nurse. Your nose may be sprayed with a local anaesthetic to numb the area. A flexible scope is then passed through your nose into your throat, where the movement of your voicebox and vocal cord can be examined.

You may feel slight discomfort during this procedure. The local anaesthetic will make the back of your throat feel numb and swollen for approximately half an hour. We advise you not to eat or drink anything for half an hour after your procedure.



- **Direct Laryngoscopy** is carried out under a general anaesthetic (you will be asleep) in an operating theatre. A rigid scope is used and any suspicious areas will be biopsied (a biopsy is where a small piece of tissue is removed during the procedure for further examination). Micro surgical procedures, such as removing vocal cord polyps, can be performed using this method.

You may have a sore throat for a short time after your procedure. Simple painkillers will be prescribed to help with any discomfort.

You will discuss with your doctor the type of Laryngoscopy you will need for your condition before your procedure is carried out.

### Are there alternatives?

If your hoarseness is due to acute laryngitis or upper respiratory infection, then steam inhalations or lozenges may help. If your symptoms continue, a closer examination will be needed.

### Are there any risks?

All general anaesthetics have some risk.

Before your procedure, you must tell your surgeon if you have any loose or chipped teeth, as the instruments which will be placed through your mouth may easily dislodge or chip teeth further.

### How will I feel after my procedure?

If a biopsy is taken during your procedure, the area around it may become sore for a short while after your surgery.

There may be a small amount of bleeding after your procedure.

### Will I have to stay in hospital after my procedure?

Your surgeon may advise you to stay in hospital overnight, in case a problem develops with your breathing due to inflammation (swelling) in your larynx.

### How do I look after myself at home?

- You may be asked to rest your voice for a week after your procedure. This allows any inflammation to go down and let your vocal cords rest back to a size where they can work properly. If you have to speak, try to use a normal voice as whispering and shouting will put more strain on your vocal cords.
- Your voice may not return to normal until your body has finished healing, which is usually after one to two weeks.
- Steam inhalations will help to reduce the dry and sore feeling in your throat.
- If you smoke you will be advised to stop, as smoking increases your chances of getting an infection or disease.

### Will I need a follow-up appointment?

If you have had a biopsy we will make a follow-up outpatients appointment for you; this will usually be within two weeks of your procedure.

You may be referred to a speech therapist for assessment or retraining of your voice.

### Further information

If you have any further questions or concerns, please telephone Rotary Ward, William Harvey Hospital, Ashford on 01233 61 62 34.

**This leaflet has been produced with and for patients**

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**Any complaints, comments, concerns, or compliments** please speak to your doctor or nurse, or contact the Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) on 01227 78 31 45, or email [ekh-tr.pals@nhs.net](mailto:ekh-tr.pals@nhs.net)

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