

David A. Phillips, MD
Christopher Y. Chang, MD
Catie Chalmers, MS, CCC/A
Judy Foster, RN

550 Hospital Drive
Warrenton, VA 20186
T 540-347-0505
F 540-347-5224
www.fauquierent.net

FAUQUIER EAR NOSE & THROAT CONSULTANTS, PLC



Post-Procedure Instructions

Removal of Vocal Cord Lesions/Masses

Removal of vocal cord lesions/masses are procedures for the diagnosis and treatment for an abnormal growth on the voice box or vocal cords. Symptoms of such growths include hoarseness, cough, sore throat, and throat clearing. The voice box (larynx) and vocal cords are located at the entrance to the wind pipe (trachea). They protect the trachea from food and saliva entering the lungs. Of course, your vocal cords also produce your voice. When an abnormal growth (a tumor, polyp, or nodule) develops on a vocal cord, any of the above symptoms may occur. Only by removing the growth can an absolute diagnosis be made. Cigarette smokers with vocal cord abnormalities in particular may need this surgery to ensure that a vocal cord cancer is not present.

- After surgery, you will be observed for several hours before being allowed to go home.
- VOICE CARE. It is imperative that you follow the instructions of your surgeon regarding proper voice care. Generally, there is a period of strict voice rest for 1-2 weeks before being allowed to slowly increase one's speech. This precaution is important as it will allow time for the surgical site to heal properly. Imagine your voice box as your knee. Imagine having a knee operation...one does not just go and start walking and running around without a period of recuperation and rehabilitation. Doing so risks further injury to your knee and possible irreparable permanent damage. The same holds true for your voice box.
- When you are first allowed to start talking, your voice may not be good. Just like in an injured knee that has been operated on, there is a period of rehabilitation before it works normally. However, with any surgical procedure, there is a risk that one's voice may never be quite normal and may even be worse than before surgery.
- Try to avoid coughing and any sort of vocalization whether it be grunting or speech.
- HYDRATION. It is imperative that you keep the voice box moist. This includes drinking plenty of fluids and having a humidifier in the room. Healing occurs best when moist and not dry (like chapped lips).
- Avoid caffeine and alcoholic beverages as these promote dehydration.
- STOP SMOKING! Smoking physically harms the voicebox. In the peri-operative period, that is even more important. It is also important for your overall health.

Medications and Follow-Up

You may be given a prescription for pain medication to take every 4-6 hours as needed for pain as well as other medications. You may also be given a prescription for anti-reflux (whether you have symptoms or not). It is important that you take this medication. Resume all home meds except NSAIDS (motrin, ibuprofen, aspirin, etc) and anti-platelet medications (ticlid, plavix, etc) which may be resumed in 3 days. Coumadin may be resumed the day after surgery as instructed by your PCP. You will have a return appointment in about one week unless otherwise instructed by your physician. On return visit, the final pathology should be known as it takes about 7 days for determination.

Contact Us

- With any questions or concerns during business hours if not life-threatening.
- Call us immediately if temperature >101.5, persistent bright red bleeding, difficulty swallowing or breathing, sudden swelling.