

Useful Telephone Numbers

- ENT Department, Lister Hospital
Telephone: 01438 314333, Ext. 5113 / 4118
- ENT Admission Office (waiting list)
Telephone: 01438 286836 or 01438 286835
- ENT Nurse Specialist (Monday to Friday, 8.30am - 6pm)
Telephone: 01438 314333, bleep 1028
Mobile: 0778 534 3359 or 0787 639 0290

Useful ENT website: www.entuk.org

In an Emergency:

Dial 999 and request an ambulance or attend the nearest A&E of the following hospitals unless away from home

- Lister Hospital A&E (SG1 4AB) - 01438 784732
- New QEII Urgent Care Centre, Welwyn Garden City - 01707 247549
- Luton and Dunstable
- Princess Alexandra Hospital, Harlow

Lister Hospital
Coreys Mill Lane
Stevenage
Hertfordshire
SG1 4AB
Tel: 01438 314333

www.enherts-tr.nhs.uk

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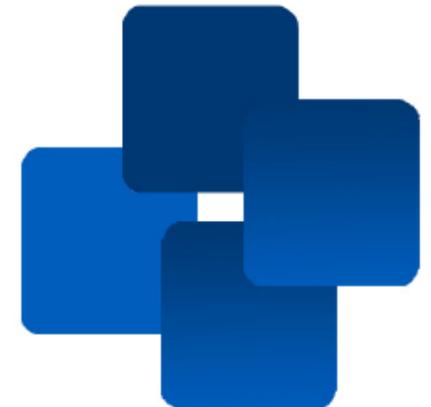
You can request this information in a different format or another language.

Patient Information

Microlaryngoscopy

(Examination of vocal chords)

Ear, Nose and Throat Department



What is microlaryngoscopy?

A microlaryngoscopy or laryngoscopy is a direct examination of your voice box (larynx or vocal cords).

Procedure and Anaesthetic

Whilst you are under general anaesthetic (asleep), your surgeon will pass a metal tube (a laryngoscope) through your mouth into your voice box. A camera (microscope) is then used to look at the voice box. This will enable the ENT specialist to investigate the cause of your voice problem such as hoarseness of voice. If needed the surgeon may remove any lesion or part of the lining of the voice box to be taken away for laboratory examination (biopsy).

Depending on the type of lesion a laser is sometimes used to remove it.

Microlaryngoscopy is quite a short operation and usually takes less than 30 minutes to do.

During general anaesthesia, the anaesthetist will, with the aid of the anaesthetic drug, keep you in a state of unconsciousness.

Risks and Complications

You may experience a slight sore throat. There is also a very small risk of chipping to a tooth, due to the metal tube.

A bruising to the vocal cords may cause temporary hoarseness of voice.

Bleeding and infection may also occur at the time of the operation or shortly afterwards

Anaesthetic Complications

Risks of anaesthesia largely depend on the patient's overall health, the nature of the operation and its seriousness.

Minor complications can include some soreness or bruising at the site of the injection in the arm or hand.

Some patients experience a sore throat if a tube has been inserted into the windpipe to assist breathing. On rare occasions this may damage teeth.

Some of the drugs used can cause muscle pains and some patients may feel sick or nauseous.

What happens after the procedure?

The operation is commonly performed as a day case or one night stay in hospital. Either way, we will only let you go home when you feel well enough.

Time off Work

At least one week off work/school.

Follow-up

If any biopsies were taken, these normally take a few days to process in a laboratory. Your surgeon will arrange to see you again for your results normally between two and six weeks after your operation.

Post-operative Care and Advice - Do I need to stop talking?

If you have had a biopsy or surgery to the voice box, do not use your voice at all for two days. Use writing or gesture to communicate. After that, gentle voice use for one week i.e. quiet speaking and only when necessary.

For a microlaryngoscopy only (where the doctors just examined the throat and voice box) there is no need for total voice rest. Use the voice gently and only when necessary for the first five days.

What can I do to conserve my voice?

- Avoid shouting, talking over background noise, singing, whispering, and calling from room to room. If your throat hurts after talking, rest your voice for at least 30 minutes. Do not talk with effort or force even if it means that your voice is quiet and breathy.
- Try to drink water frequently during the day (unless advised otherwise by your doctor).
- Reduce intake of alcohol and caffeinated drinks (tea, coffee, cola).
- Avoid smoky, dry, or dusty atmospheres.
- Hot, spicy and acidic food/drink can cause throat irritation.
- Steam inhalations can be used if experiencing mucus/catarrh.
- Vigorous throat clearing and coughing can damage the vocal cords. Swallow a sip of water with your chin tucked down - if you still need to clear your throat do so gently.
- You may be referred to Speech and Language Therapy to see a therapist who specialises in voice problems. He/she will assess you and give advice and voice rehabilitation exercises as needed.