

This leaflet WILL give you the advice you need to facilitate optimal healing and voice quality after your operation. If you get a chance, prepare your friends and family for this operation, as it will affect your ability to speak for the first few days.

Immediately after the procedure:

- **COMPLETE VOICE REST.** For the first 3 - 5 days after the operation, we recommend that you do not speak at all. This includes whispering, laughing out loud and singing. Alternative methods of communication during this period include:

- **Writing notes or using gestures** to communicate with your friends and relatives. It may be useful to buy a notepad or small whiteboard that you can use after the procedure.
- **Texting/ emailing.**
- **Text-to-speech apps** are available for smart phones and tablets. There is usually a free version on offer.

- **Eat and drink normally.**
- **Avoid caffeine as far as possible.**
- **If applicable, take your normal medication for acid reflux** and avoid foods that you know do not agree with you.
- **Try not to clear your throat and try not to cough.** Have a drink instead.

- **Drink plenty of water:** aim for eight glasses of water a day to keep your voice box hydrated. You may feel very dry in your mouth and throat after your surgery because of the anaesthetic and the surgery itself. This should improve after a few days.
- **Use steam inhalation** to soothe and lubricate your voice box (breathing in the steam from a bowl of hot water with a towel over your head for 5-10 minutes, twice a day – use hot rather than boiling water to avoid scalding).
- **Avoid smoking and drinking alcohol** and avoid spending time in places where others are smoking.

3-5 days after the procedure:

- After your 3-5 days of complete voice rest you can start gently using your voice again. **Start at a pitch and volume that feels comfortable and effortless**, and gradually increase the amount of talking you do.
- **Do not push or strain to talk.** In most instances, your voice will be hoarse for a period after the surgery and this is to be expected.
- **Avoid clearing your throat, shouting or singing** until your doctor or speech and language therapist tells you it is safe to do so.
- **Continue drinking plenty of water and doing regular steam inhalation.**

The vocal cords may take 6-8 weeks to heal fully after laser surgery, so over this time you should treat your voice with care.

Contact us:

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact the Speech and Language Therapy Department at **Queen Victoria Hospital** on **01342 414471** Opening hours (with voicemail) 8-5pm Monday to Friday.

Recovering from laser surgery to the larynx (voice box)

Speech and Language Therapy

Please ask if you
would like this leaflet
in larger print or a
different format.

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