

Laryngoscopy - Post Operative Instructions

Surgery

Laryngoscopy with biopsy or injection involves a brief general anesthesia, typically for less than one hour. Patients may be sedated for several hours after surgery and may remain sleepy for most of the day. You may have nausea or vomiting, but it usually goes away by the evening of surgery without additional medication. Almost all patients can go home the day of surgery.

After Surgery

- You will have a sore throat from the metal instruments for 3-5 days after surgery. Some patients may have sores on the tongue or in the mouth. This is normal, and you will be given pain medications for it. If you have sores in the mouth, avoid citrus or acidic foods/drinks since they will burn
- Avoid coughing or frequent throat-clearing. Drinking water can help alleviate the urge to clear the throat
- Avoid any heavy lifting (more than 20 lbs), straining, exercise, or sports activities for 2 weeks after surgery
- Avoid alcohol, tobacco products, spicy foods, or eating late at night, as these may cause heartburn or stomach reflux and may delay the healing process
- Your voice may be hoarse after surgery from swelling of the vocal cords
- You do not have to avoid talking unless your surgeon gives you specific instructions. Use your normal voice – whispering is harder on your vocal cords than talking at a regular volume
- If your surgeon advises voice rest, you should do the following:
 - You are to have absolute voice rest for 7 days. You may want to purchase a dry erase board to communicate during this time. After that, you may begin to use your voice at a soft-spoken level
 - You should only speak loud enough for people within an arm's length away to hear you. Do not yell or whisper. After the first 7 days of rest, you may increase your voice use by 5 minutes per hour each day

Medication

Pain medication can be used for pain as prescribed. Pain in the throat and the tongue is normal. Some patients will be given steroids or acid-reducing medications after surgery. Take these as directed.

Take all of your routine medications as prescribed unless told otherwise by your surgeon. Any medications that thin the blood should be avoided unless approved by your surgeon. These include aspirin and aspirin-like products (Advil, Motrin, Excedrin, Naprosyn).

Final Result

- Following vocal cord injection, the voice may seem “strangled” due to swelling for a few days or weeks. This is normal.
- If you have a biopsy in surgery, you will usually find out the results when you are seen in the office for follow-up.
- Many patients benefit from voice therapy after surgery to improve the long-term result. Your surgeon will recommend this if he or she thinks you could benefit from it.