

Post-operative Instructions Phonosurgery – Voice, Vocal Cord or Laryngeal Surgery

For the first few days after surgery, you are encouraged to rest. **Do not participate in any strenuous activity which may raise your blood pressure or heart rate** until your doctor believes you are adequately healed. This includes going to work if your job requires physical exertion. *Expect to miss a few days of work after your surgery. Do not sit on the couch or in bed all day, get up and walk around as this will help prevent complications.* When to resume normal activities can be discussed during your post-operative visits. In the meantime, **resume all of your routine medications prescribed by your physicians with the exception of aspirin, ibuprofen, Advil, Motrin, Aleve or any other blood thinning medications such as plavix and/or coumadin (warfarin).**

Strict voice rest is of the utmost importance for the first week after surgery. Phonation (the production of sound) can result in bruising, swelling and/or bleeding at the surgical site and cause poor healing and permanent voice impairment. Whispering is much worse than a normal softer speaking voice and should also be avoided. In cases of life threatening emergencies, however, by all means call out for assistance to those around you or by telephone. Most other instances of phonation should be avoided.

Excessive coughing and/or throat clearing is also very rough on the vocal cords and attempts should be made to avoid these maneuvers. You will be given cough suppressants to be taken regularly in the recovery period. Should you feel mucous in your throat that needs to be cleared, sip/drink fluids or forcefully exhale without closing your vocal cords (if you are unclear as to how this is done, please discuss with your surgeon prior to surgery).

For the most part, there are no restrictions on foods or liquids after surgery. However, any reflux of stomach contents or acid can also affect the healing of your vocal cords. If you are prone to reflux or heartburn, avoid the typical triggers such as: alcohol, spicy foods, chocolate, mint, citrus, tomatoes, caffeine, and fried or fatty foods. You will also be given reflux medications to take in the recovery period whether or not you have a history of reflux.

Also, refrain from smoking (tobacco or anything else) as the direct irritation from the heat and smoke will also impair healing.