

ENT outpatient clinic Charing Cross Hospital

Vocal cord injection (VCI)

Information for patients, relatives and carers

Introduction

This leaflet aims to tell you about **vocal cord injections**. It is not meant to replace the discussion between you and your medical team. If you have any questions, please contact us.

About the procedure

Your consultant has recommended that you have an injection to your vocal cord/s to improve your voice. The injection material 'plumps up' or makes fuller the vocal cords and improves closure of the glottis (the opening between the vocal cords), giving a stronger voice.

You will be told more about the procedure in clinic. If you and your surgeon both agree to proceed, you will be given a date to attend the outpatient clinic. You will be able to ask your consultant questions before the procedure and they will ask you to sign the consent form.

The procedure

You should expect to spend 30 minutes in our ENT outpatient clinic. You can eat and drink as normal beforehand.

The procedure will start with a scope being introduced through your nose to allow the surgeon to see your airway. A combination of nasal sprays and an injection of local anaesthetic will numb the area. After 5 minutes we will replace the scope and then inject your vocal cords with the filler material via your neck. This procedure may take several minutes to complete, during which time you will be able to talk to the surgeon if necessary.

Filler materials used for injections

We use two different types of filler material in our interventional clinics:

- hyaluronic acid injections (HA). This is found naturally in our bodies and so only lasts around 2 to 3 months.
- calcium hydroxyapatite injections (CaH). This can be natural or synthetic, and so lasts longer, for around 9 to 12 months.

Please let us know if you are allergic to either material. Your options will be discussed in clinic.

After the procedure

You will be asked not to eat or drink for 1 hour because of the effect of the local anaesthetic on your swallowing. After this time, you can eat normally. You will be able to return home and continue normal activities including work. You may experience some mild discomfort after the procedure and can take over-the-counter pain relief if required.

You will also be advised to rest your voice for 48 hours after the procedure, which will make sure you get the greatest benefit out of the procedure. Please use other methods of communication during this time, such as a pen and paper or electronic device.

If you have any acute breathing difficulties or are unable to swallow after the procedure, please attend your nearest accident and emergency department.

Follow up

Six weeks after the procedure, a clinical nurse specialist (CNS) will call you for a telephone follow up appointment. They may arrange a face-to-face outpatient appointment with your consultant or a repeat procedure.

For any non-urgent queries please contact the laryngology CNS Margaret Ashcroft on mobile: 075 5758 7768 or Matteo De Blasi on mobile: 077 7080 4495 (Monday to Friday, 09.00 –16.00).

How do I make a comment about my visit?

We aim to provide the best possible service and staff will be happy to answer any of the questions you may have. If you have any suggestions or comments about your visit, please either speak to a member of staff or contact the patient advice and liaison service (PALS) on 020 3313 0088 (Charing Cross, Hammersmith and Queen Charlotte's & Chelsea hospitals), or 020 3312 7777 (St Mary's and Western Eye hospitals). You can also email PALS at imperial.pals@nhs.net The PALS team will listen to your concerns, suggestions or queries and is often able to help solve problems on your behalf.

Alternatively, you may wish to complain by contacting our complaints department:
Complaints department, fourth floor, Salton House,
St Mary's Hospital, Praed Street,
London W2 1NY

Email: ICHC-tr.Complaints@nhs.net

Telephone: 020 3312 1337 / 1349

Alternative formats

This leaflet can be provided on request in large print or easy read, as a sound recording, in Braille or in alternative languages. Please email the communications team: imperial.communications@nhs.net

Wi-fi

Wi-fi is available at our Trust. For more information visit our website: www.imperial.nhs.uk

ENT Department
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