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Patient information sheet - Microlaryngoscopy

You have been placed on Mr Costello's waiting list for a procedure known as a **microlaryngoscopy**. This means an examination of the larynx (voice box) under general anaesthetic.

The aim of your operation is twofold: firstly, to try to establish precisely what is wrong with your larynx and vocal cords; and secondly, to try to improve your voice.

It is likely that you will be asleep for about 45 minutes during the procedure. The anaesthetist will talk to you about the anaesthetic on the day of the operation, but anaesthetics of this sort are very routine, with very little risk.

Immediately after the operation, it is very important that you **do not speak at all for two days**. This includes whispering. You will require a pad and a pen to communicate during this time. Avoid laughing aloud.

From the second post-operative day, you may use your voice as follows:

- Day 2 post-op: for five minutes at a time, quietly, three times on this day
- Day 3 post-op: for five minutes at a time, quietly, five times on this day
- Day 4 post-op: five minutes at a time, quietly, ten times on this day
- Day 5 post-op and beyond: quiet speaking whenever required

During the post-operative healing time, it is very important that you do not shout or strain your voice, or clear your throat excessively. At your post-operative check (usually at two weeks), your vocal cords will be examined and you will be given further advice.

The operation will probably be done as a day case: in other words, you should be able to go home on the same day. You may eat and drink normally after the operation.

As with any surgical procedure, there are potential risks in this operation. Specifically, you must be aware of the following:

- Risk of the anaesthetic. It is exceptionally rare for there to be problems associated with general anaesthesia. The anaesthetist will talk to you about this.
- Damage to teeth. In performing this procedure, a rigid laryngoscope is used to examine the vocal cords. Very rarely, teeth can be chipped in the course of doing this.
- Sore throat. You will wake up with a sore throat, but this should only last a day or two, and simple painkillers (e.g. Paracetamol) should help to relieve the discomfort.
- Change in voice. Although the aim of the operation is to improve your voice, this cannot be guaranteed.
- Further operations. It is possible that you will require more than one operation to correct any abnormality that is found.

Mr Costello will come to talk to you before your procedure, so feel free to ask any questions at that point.