

# Information for new laryngectomy patients

Department of Speech and Language

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Information for Patients

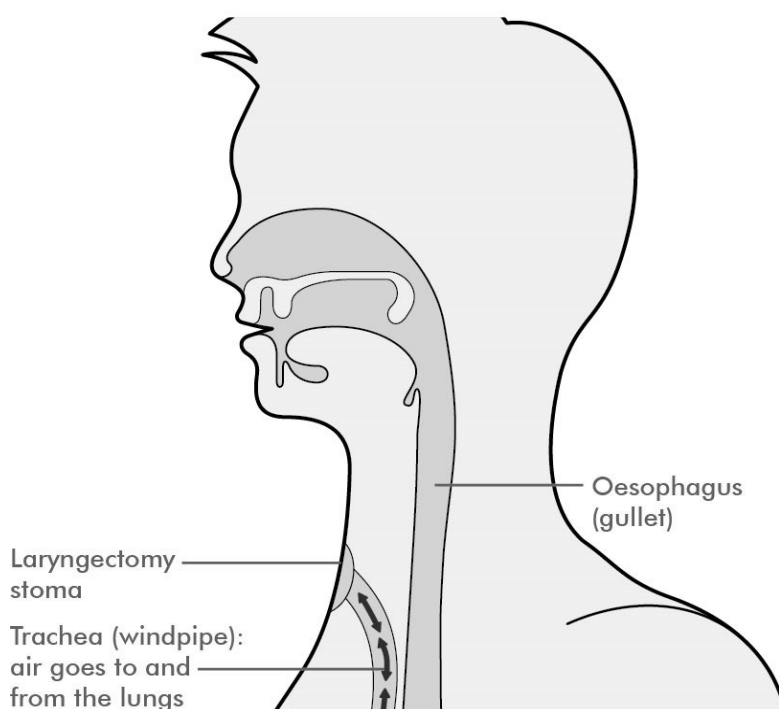
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## Introduction

This booklet has been written to give you important information about your surgery and aftercare.

Your larynx (voice box) has been completely removed and there is no connection between your mouth/nose and lungs. You will now permanently breathe through a hole (also called a stoma) in your neck. The diagram below shows this.



With thanks to Macmillan Cancer Support for the diagram

**Health information and support is available at [www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk)  
or call 111 for non-emergency medical advice**

Visit [www.leicestershospitals.nhs.uk](http://www.leicestershospitals.nhs.uk) for maps and information about visiting Leicester's Hospitals  
To give feedback about this information sheet, contact [InformationForPatients@uhl-tr.nhs.uk](mailto:InformationForPatients@uhl-tr.nhs.uk)

## How will I breathe?

You will now breathe through the hole at the front of your neck (stoma). Having a stoma is safe and it will not close down completely.

After your operation you will have a tube in your stoma. This is usually removed within 48 hours and a softer tube called a LaryTube is put in its place. This LaryTube can be easily taken in and out so that it can be cleaned. When the swelling has gone down you will not need to wear a LaryTube. This may happen in hospital or when you have been discharged home.

It is important that you keep your stoma clean so that you can breathe easily. You should check your stoma at least three times a day to start with and clean it when you see phlegm in or around your stoma or when your breathing is more difficult. This will become part of your daily routine.

You will be given a nebuliser to take home with you. This will help to keep your phlegm thin. You can use this three or four times a day depending on how much phlegm you are producing. Your phlegm may change according to the time of year, and if you have a cold or are chesty. At this time you may need to increase the amount of times that you use the nebuliser.

There is a separate booklet "How to look after your stoma". This gives you information about your stoma and how to look after it.

## How will I communicate?

After the operation you will have no voice. You will be able to mouth and write to communicate immediately after your laryngectomy.

There are several options to help you communicate:

**Mouthing:** (moving your mouth) can be an effective form of communication. Exaggerated mouthing and slow pace will make this more successful.

**Electro larynx:** an electronic device that is placed under your chin or on your neck and makes sound vibrations in the mouth that can be formed into speech.

**Oesophageal speech:** air is swallowed and pushed into the food passage (oesophagus). As the air is forced out from the food passage it vibrates the passage walls. Movements of the lips, cheeks and tongue turn the sound into words.

**Voice prosthesis (speaking valve):** There is a separate booklet "Useful information about your valve and emergency care information". This gives you information about your valve and how to look after it.

## How will I swallow?

You will only be allowed to eat and drink after you have fully healed from your surgery. You will have an X-ray to check this.

Swallowing is affected after your operation because your new anatomy works in a different way. It can reduce your control of your mouth and pressure for swallowing. This may mean that you need a modified diet for a while, but the aim is to get you back to eating and drinking normally. Those who have had more extensive surgery may find eating and drinking more difficult.

You are likely to have acid reflux after your operation and may be prescribed long-term anti-reflux medication via your GP.

If you feel that you are having swallowing problems please contact your speech and language therapist (see contact details). You may need to have a special X-ray to help us to give you the correct advice about swallowing.

## Going home

You may find that when you go home you need to make a few changes which could include things such as:

- Adapting to your new stoma and how to look after it, including protecting your stoma against extreme temperature/atmospheric changes.
- Organising the equipment needed to look after your stoma (and valve if you have one)
- Adapting to your new ways of communicating. You may find it helpful if you are able to use texting.
- Adapting to changes in your eating and drinking. You may need to chew more, eat more slowly or have smaller meals more often

You will be registered with an equipment company and will be provided with equipment when you go home. You will be responsible for re-ordering what you need as you need it. This is done through prescriptions from your GP.

You will be offered regular speech and language therapy appointments to help you manage all aspects of your care.

## Who to contact

### Speech and Language Therapists

(Monday to Friday 8.30am to 4.30pm)

Office: 0116 258 5363

Sarah Harris: 07789 878 087

Email: sarah.harris@leicspart.nhs.uk

Claire Sussenbach: 07900 714 472

Email: claire.sussenbach@leicspart.nhs.uk

### Clinical Nurse Specialists

(Monday to Friday 8:30am to 4:30pm)

07960 500 043 or 07950 967 983

### Kinmonth Unit

(24 hours a day, 7 days a week)

0116 258 5327

### Head and Neck Dietitians

(Monday to Friday 8:30am to 4:30pm)

0116 258 5265 or 0116 258 5400

## Further information

The following link takes you to a web-page where you can watch videos that you might find useful:

[www.leicestershospitals.nhs.uk/aboutus/departments-services/speech-and-language/head-and-neck-speech-therapy/](http://www.leicestershospitals.nhs.uk/aboutus/departments-services/speech-and-language/head-and-neck-speech-therapy/)

اگر آپ کو یہ معلومات کسی اور زبان میں درکار ہیں، تو براہ کرم مندرجہ ذیل نمبر پر ٹیلی فون کریں۔  
على هذه المعلومات بلغة أخرى، الرجاء الاتصال على رقم الهاتف الذي يظهر في الأسفل

જો તમને અન્ય ભાષામાં આ માહિતી જોઈતી હોય, તો નીચે આપેલ નંબર પર કૃપા કરી ટેલિફોન કરો

ਜੇ ਤੁਸੀਂ ਇਹ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ ਕਸਿ ਹੋਰ ਭਾਸ਼ਾ ਵਿਚ ਚਾਹੁੰਦੇ ਹੋ, ਤਾਂ ਕਰਿਪਾ ਕਰਕੇ ਹੇਠਾਂ ਦਿੱਤੇ ਗਏ ਨੰਬਰ 'ਤੇ ਟੈਲੀਫੋਨ ਕਰੋ।

Aby uzyskać informacje w innym języku, proszę zadzwonić pod podany niżej numer telefonu

Previous reference:

If you would like this information in another language or format such as EasyRead or Braille, please telephone 0116 250 2959 or email [equality@uhl-tr.nhs.uk](mailto:equality@uhl-tr.nhs.uk)