

What to Expect After Laryngoscopy & Bronchoscopy

RM Rosenfeld

Your child has just undergone an in-depth evaluation of the air and breathing passages, and may have also had something removed from the vocal cords (most likely with a laser). Your doctor will discuss the findings with you, and may also show you a photograph from the procedure.

After Surgery

Your child will most likely be crying or upset in the recovery room, and their voice may be weak or hoarse. You may also notice a barking “croup-like” cough, and even some noisy breathing; this is all to be expected and will not injure the voice box or windpipe. Disorientation is common after general anesthesia, and causes 90% of the crying you may notice in the recovery room (the other 10% may be due to discomfort). After a brief recovery period, your child will most likely go to the pediatric floor for several hours. Overnight observation may be required for some children.

A hoarse or weak voice may persist for several days, but should gradually improve. Coughing and noisy breathing will also improve gradually over time. Older children may complain of muscle aches for several days, because of certain medications given during the procedure. Any discomfort can be relieved by acetaminophen (Tylenol).

Diet & Activity

Infants and younger children may resume bottle feeding and soft foods soon after surgery. Older children should be given soft foods for the first 24 hours following surgery, and can then usually resume a normal diet. If a laser was used, however, your child’s throat will most likely be sore for several days, and a soft diet should be continued until there is no further discomfort.

Older children may return to school or day care within one or two days after surgery. While normal activity can typically be resumed by the morning after surgery, some voice rest is helpful *if* a laser was used during the operation. Older children should be encouraged to avoid yelling or whispering; regular talking is fine.

The Office Visit After Surgery

Your doctor will want to see you and your child back in several weeks, to further discuss the results of the procedure and to plan any additional care. Appointments are generally scheduled at least one month in advance, so please allow adequate lead time when calling.

When to Call Us

Call our office if 1) your child is having any breathing difficulty following surgery, 2) breathing is noisy *and* getting worse, not better, as the days go by, 3) there are persistent swallowing troubles that interfere with your child’s ability to maintain an adequate diet, 4) your child develops a progressive or persistent cough following surgery, or 5) fever is 102 degrees or higher *despite* acetaminophen (Tylenol). Ask to speak to the nurse when you call; she will discuss it with the doctor and arrange timely follow-up.

I have received a copy of this information sheet.

Parent or Guardian _____ Relation to child _____

Child’s name _____ Date _____