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Laryngeal Surgery and Aerodigestive Endoscopy

What is a microlaryngoscopy, laryngoscopy, esophagoscopy, and bronchoscopy?

These procedures are all examinations of the aerodigestive system under anesthesia. The ending oscopy means look with a scope. Laryngoscopy and microlaryngoscopy are examinations of the voice box and lower throat. Esophagoscopy is an examination of the esophagus or swallowing tube. Bronchoscopy is an examination of the trachea, bronchi, and lungs. The procedures can be a simple examination, or can involve biopsy, therapeutic injection, dilation, or more complex surgery.

Indications

These procedures may be scheduled when

- A known lesion in these areas needs treatment
- Examination for possible cancer
- Trouble swallowing
- Hoarseness
- Trouble breathing
- Many other reasons

Hospital Stay

Generally you will be discharged on the same day as surgery. Occasionally an overnight stay is required. Rarely, longer hospitalization may be required to manage any pre or post-op difficulties.

Anesthesia

Before your surgery the Anesthesiologist will talk with you about anesthesia and what to expect. Typically, an IV is started in the preoperative area and a combination of medications is given. Make sure to mention to the anesthesiologist any problems with previous anesthetics, or family history of anesthetic problems.

Surgery

The tonsillectomy is done through the mouth after the patient is completely asleep. An instrument is used to open the mouth and hold it open during the procedure. No external incisions are made.

Risks

As with any surgery, there are not only benefits but also risks. As with any operation, there may be some unanticipated complications besides those listed here. Postoperative bleeding is possible but usually short lived. Pain in the mouth, a sore tongue, a cracked or cut lip, or a chipped tooth is possible and somewhat more common. Hoarseness or an injury or scar on the voice box is possible. Other risks from include voice change, scarring or stricture of the throat, swallowing difficulty or pain. With esophagoscopy the most serious risk is tear or perforation of

the esophagus. This could cause leakage of food or saliva into the neck or the chest. A serious infection can result. Fortunately, this is very rare.

POST OPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS

Postoperative activity

Avoid strenuous activity for one week. Patients may return to work or school as tolerated. Most patients will need at least 1 week of recuperation before resuming their normal activities.

Postoperative diet

No diet restrictions typically are required after laryngoscopy or bronchoscopy. If an esophagoscopy was done, diet will be discussed by your surgeon. Increase diet as tolerated. Your diet should return to normal rapidly.

Voice and speaking

If a laryngoscopy was done voice rest is indicated. Typically 48 hours is required. Your surgeon will let you know if a shorter or longer period is required. Voice rest requires minimal to no speaking for the specified time. Whispering is just as bad as talking. Yelling or shouting is very bad. If one must speak, quiet normal voice is best. Throat clearing is just as bad as talking. Avoid is as well. This can be difficult. Salt water gargles or cough drops may minimize the desire to clear the throat.

Postoperative pain

Mild drinking fluids and leads to dehydration. To minimize pain, drink plenty of fluids and take prescribed pain medications or tylenol. throat discomfort is to be expected. There is no cause for alarm unless pain is so severe that it prevents

Reasons for contacting the office or the doctor after hours

Call for bleeding that does not stop in 10 minutes

Signs of dehydration such as decreased urine output

High fever >102

Any question or concern (we would much rather reassure about expected outcomes than have families worry that something is not right)

Follow-Up Appointment

Follow up is usually around four weeks after surgery. Please call the clinic to schedule this.

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