Inflammatory and Autoimmune Disorders of the Larynx

Since the larynx is the crossroads between gastrointestinal and respiratory tracts it has a significant immunologic role. Due to its immune activity, the larynx participates in several inflammatory and autoimmune disorders.

Anatomy & Physiology
- Immune anatomy (compartmentalization) of the larynx: supraglottis, glottis and subglottis
- Laryngeal-associated lymphoid tissue (LALT): primarily located in the supraglottis

Granulomatosis with polyangiitis (GPA)
- Formerly known as Wegener's granulomatosis. 10-20% of patients with GPA have subglottic involvement. Airway disease is frequently independent of the systemic disease. Therapy is systemic, yet often a localized complementary treatment is necessary.

Amyloidosis
- Abnormal formation and deposition of amyloid protein fibers. Although rare, laryngeal amyloidosis is the most common amyloidosis manifestation within the head and neck. Laryngeal amyloidosis is usually a localized primary disease, yet it may be associated with an underlying disorder such as, multiple myeloma.
Sarcoidosis

- A systemic granulomatous disease of undetermined etiology with a variable clinical presentation. The classical appearance of laryngeal sarcoidosis is smooth submucosal swellings of supraglottic structures.

Relapsing Polychondritis

- Episodic inflammation of cartilaginous structures throughout the body, involving the cartilage of the ears, nose, larynx, tracheobronchial tree, eyes, and heart's connective components. The clinical spectrum varies from intermittent inflammatory episodes leading to cartilage deformities to life-threatening airway collapse or valvular regurgitation.

Rheumatoid nodules/Bamboo nodes

- Whitish transverse submucosal lesions within the vocal folds, commonly presents with dysphonia. Associated with various autoimmune diseases.
**Pemphigus**

- Autoimmune disease of skin and mucous membranes. In the larynx, supraglottic involvement is the most common. Presents with painful erosions, typical appearance of whitish exudates or erythematous patches.

* Chapter 13: Laryngeal and Tracheal Manifestations of Systemic Disease.
* Chapter 62: Acute and Chronic Laryngitis.