



## **Office Injection Augmentation of Vocal Folds**

### **Purpose, Indications, Contraindications**

An in-office vocal fold injection/augmentation is performed to deliver a filler material into one or both vocal folds to improve the voice and/or swallowing functions. This procedure is performed when the vocal folds do not close completely. This occurs when the vocal folds lack bulk (e.g. vocal fold bowing) or when the vocal folds do not move properly (e.g. vocal fold paralysis). Many ENT physicians perform this procedure in the office with the patient awake so that the patient's voice can be assessed in real time. If the patient's voice is still hoarse after the first injection, more filler can be injected immediately. There are less risks to the patient as an operation is avoided and costs are lower.

This procedure is not suitable for patients with severe heart or lung problems, allergy to filler material or anesthetic medication, poor exposure of the voice box with flexible endoscopy (camera), and difficult mouth or neck anatomy. Some patients who also need further voice box surgery or those patients who are on blood thinners may not be suitable for this procedure. Your ENT physician will make the final decision.

### **Pre-procedure Considerations**

A vocal fold injection takes about 30 minutes and can be performed in the same visit, or booked as a separate procedure visit. Ask your ENT physician if you should stop your blood thinners and whether you should stop eating or drinking in advance. You can drive yourself home afterwards and you can wear normal street clothes to the doctor's office.

### **Summary of Procedure**

The patient is seated in a normal examination chair. The nose and throat areas are numbed up with medicine, like lidocaine. The medicine may be sprayed into the nose or mouth, injected into the skin in front of the voice box, nebulized into the mouth like an asthma medication, or dribbled down the voice box with a camera. A flexible camera is passed into the nose down through the throat to look at the vocal folds. A very small needle is used to deliver the filler material, either through the mouth or through the skin of the neck. Your ENT physician may ask you to talk to hear your voice. If your voice is still hoarse, your doctor may decide to inject more filler into your vocal folds.

### **Post-procedure Guidelines**

Immediately after the procedure, the patient's voice may seem tight or effortful to speak. It may remain tight for a few days to a week, but will improve as the swelling improves. All the filler materials are temporary and will gradually resorb over months, depending on which filler is used. The patient may have a numb throat after the procedure and the patient should have nothing to eat or drink for 1-2 hours after the procedure. Discomfort is minimal and acetaminophen may be taken on an as needed basis. Risks of bleeding and infection are low. Your ENT physician may ask you to stay in the office for 30 minutes after the procedure for observation. Please call your doctor if you have any concerns.