

Patient Information

Post-operative Care and Recovery Following Type 1 Medialisation Thyroplasty

What is Type 1 Thyroplasty?

Type 1 thyroplasty is a voice surgery used to treat **unilateral vocal fold paralysis or weakness**. This condition can cause a weak, breathy voice and difficulty speaking or projecting. In this procedure, a small window is made in the cartilage of your voice box (thyroid cartilage), and a custom implant is inserted to push the weak vocal fold closer to the midline. This allows the vocal folds to come together more effectively during speech.

The goal of the surgery is to **improve voice strength, clarity, and quality**.

What to Expect After Surgery

- The surgery is usually done under **local anaesthetic with sedation**, so you may be awake and asked to speak during the procedure.
 - It is typically a **day-case procedure**, meaning you can go home the same day.
 - Your voice may sound different or rough immediately after surgery—this usually improves over the following days to weeks.
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Aftercare at Home

1. Voice Use

- **Rest your voice** for the first **48 hours**:
 - Avoid talking, whispering, or throat clearing.
 - Use text, writing, or gestures to communicate.
- After 2 days, you can **gradually reintroduce gentle voice use**, speaking only when necessary and in a soft, clear tone.
- Avoid loud talking, shouting, or singing for **2–3 weeks**, or until your specialist advises.

2. Pain and Discomfort

- Mild pain, bruising, or swelling at the front of the neck is normal.
- Take **paracetamol** for discomfort. Avoid anti-inflammatory medications (like ibuprofen) unless prescribed, as they may increase bleeding risk.

- You may feel tightness or a lump in your throat for a few days—this usually settles.

3. Wound Care

- You may have a small incision on the front of your neck.
- Keep the wound **clean and dry** for the first few days.
- Avoid applying creams or lotions to the area unless advised.
- Stitches are often dissolvable; if not, your ENT team will let you know when to return for removal.

4. Diet and Hydration

- Resume a **normal diet** as soon as you are comfortable.
- Drink **plenty of water** to keep your throat and vocal folds well hydrated.
- Avoid very hot, spicy, or acidic foods for the first few days if they irritate your throat.

5. Activities

- Avoid strenuous activity, heavy lifting, or intense exercise for at least **7–10 days**.
- Sleep with your head slightly elevated for the first few nights to reduce swelling.

Follow-Up and Voice Therapy

- You will usually have a **follow-up appointment** with your ENT surgeon 1–2 weeks after surgery.
- You may also be referred to a **speech and language therapist (SLT)** to help optimise voice use and support recovery.
- Voice therapy is a key part of your rehabilitation and helps prevent tension or strain during voice use.

When to Seek Medical Advice

Contact your ENT team or GP if you experience:

- Difficulty breathing or significant swelling
- Increasing or severe neck pain
- Bleeding or discharge from the wound
- Fever or signs of infection
- Persistent or worsening voice changes

Expected Recovery Timeline

Timeframe	What to Expect
Days 1–2	Voice rest, mild discomfort, swelling at the neck
Week 1	Gradual return to speaking, wound healing begins
Week 2–3	Continued improvement in voice quality, return to daily activities
After 3 weeks	Full voice use may resume as advised by your team

Summary of Aftercare

Do:	Don't:
Follow voice rest for the first 48 hours	Talk, whisper, or sing too soon
Keep the wound clean and dry	Touch or pick at the wound site
Stay well hydrated	Smoke or expose yourself to irritants
Attend all follow-up and SLT sessions	Return to strenuous activities too early

Need Help or Advice?

If you are concerned about your recovery or voice, contact your ENT clinic or speech and language therapist.