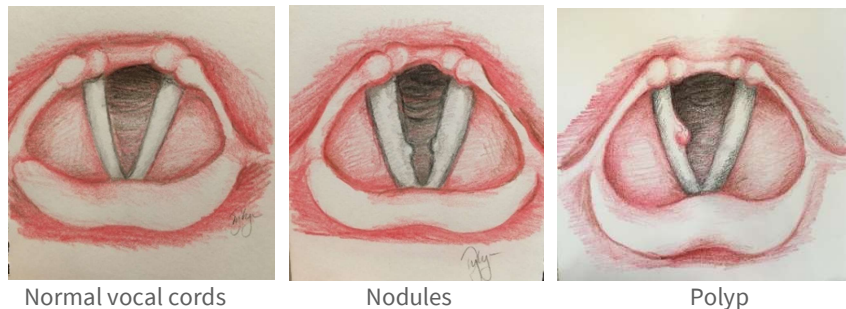


Vocal Cord Nodules and Polyps

Vocal cord nodules and polyps are bumps or swellings on the vocal cords. Nodules are like a pair of callouses while polyps are usually softer and found on one cord rather than both. They are not cancer. Both interfere with the vibration and closure of the vocal cords, making your voice sound hoarse or breathy.



Causes

Vocal cord nodules and polyps are usually caused by excessive squeezing in the larynx when talking, talking a lot and talking in noisy environments. Nodules usually form over a long period of time but polyps can be caused by a single episode of yelling or screaming with a lot of strain. Anyone can get vocal cord nodules and polyps, however they are most common in people who have a high load on their voice and talk loudly such as singers, teachers, fitness instructors, vocal fold palsy, children, lawyers, coaches, actors and performers.

Diagnosis

Vocal cord nodules and polyps are diagnosed by looking at the larynx through a camera via the nose by an Ear Nose and Throat doctor (ENT), sometimes in conjunction with a Speech Pathologist at a voice clinic. This is not painful but can be a little uncomfortable so an anaesthetic is first sprayed into the nose.

Treatment

The first line of treatment for vocal cord nodules and polyps is voice therapy with a Speech Pathologist experienced in voice. Therapy includes exercises that promote efficient voicing and making changes to speaking environments. In some cases surgery may be required. This is discussed with your ENT.