

PATIENT INFORMATION

Transoral Laser Resection

Why do I need the operation?

You will have had some biopsies at the back of your mouth, which may have included the tonsils, back of the tongue and your voice box (larynx). The biopsies have confirmed that you have some tissue changes or abnormal growth of cells. These cells can either be a pre-cancerous condition known as severe dysplasia or a cancer. Your surgeon will have informed you of the diagnosis.

What happens during the operation?

The operation will be performed under general anaesthetic which means that you will be asleep throughout. This is a relatively new surgical technique, which is less invasive, minimises risks and speeds recovery. There are no visible signs of surgery as the surgeon uses a microscope to aim a high intensity laser beam through the mouth. A laser is a very fine hot beam of light, which removes the area of concern and a small margin of healthy tissue.

Some patients will also have a neck dissection to one or both sides of the neck, under the same general anaesthetic. If you are undergoing this part of the operation, you will be provided with an additional leaflet explaining this surgery.

What happens after the surgery?

After the procedure you may find your throat hurts. This should settle quickly with simple painkillers such as paracetamol or ibuprofen. After you have had time to recover from the anaesthetic and you are able to eat and drink, you may go home. This will be discussed with you by the surgeon.

Take gentle exercise for a few days avoiding vigorous activities.

Depending on your job you may be advised to stay off work for a few days to rest your throat.

Your GP will be sent a discharge summary and so will be aware of the operation you will have had. You will be given a copy of this before you go home. You will be sent an appointment to see the surgeon again within a couple of weeks to discuss the results of the surgery.

What complications could occur?

These are very safe procedures and complications are rare.

While in hospital your nurses will be able to check for any bleeding or swelling of the area operated on. If you experience either of these when you get home you will need to be seen as soon as possible by the surgeon's team, and so will need to go to the Emergency Department urgently.

It is expected that you will experience discomfort for up to 10 days after the surgery, and you will need to take regular painkillers such as soluble paracetamol and ibuprofen if appropriate. We advise that you buy these in readiness before your operation. During this time you should try to eat and drink normally as this will help with the healing process and reduce the risk of infection. However if the pain increases or your swallowing becomes more difficult, please contact your GP or phone one of the contact numbers on this leaflet for advice. Increased levels of pain when swallowing may be a sign of infection which, although rare, may require being treated with antibiotics.

If you have any concerns about the planned procedure, you can discuss this with your surgeon or with

 **Head and Neck Cancer Nurse Specialist on 01803 655044.**

Please note that the information in this leaflet is to be used as a guide only.

Each individual's needs will be discussed by the Nursing Staff and Doctors before discharge from hospital.

For further assistance or to receive this information in a different format, please contact the department which created this leaflet.