

# The multidisciplinary team (MDT) voice clinic

**This leaflet gives information about the MDT voice clinic. Because you will see different types of clinician in the meeting, it is called a multidisciplinary team (MDT) appointment. If you have any questions, please speak to a clinician caring for your child.**

Your child has been asked to come to the voice clinic. This is so that their voice box and vocal folds can be seen with a camera when they are awake and talking.

## Before the appointment

You will be asked to complete some forms with your child in the waiting room before the appointment. We will also ask for your permission to use the video recording of your child's voice box for teaching other professionals. You do not have to consent to this. If you do not consent to this it will not affect your child's treatment plan in any way.

## During the appointment

Your child will be seen by a speech and language therapist and at least 1 consultant ENT surgeon. These people are specialists in voice disorders, but there might also be other clinicians in the room.

The specialists will:

- talk to you and your child about your child's voice difficulties
- look inside your child's mouth and nose
- feel your child's neck and shoulders

Then, a numbing spray is squirted up your child's nostril to help the camera move more easily and to make your child more comfortable. The spray can leave an unpleasant taste but this is only temporary. Your child should not eat or drink for 20 minutes after this procedure. This is because they might not feel food or drink going 'down the wrong way' (aspirate, when things enter your lungs instead of your stomach).

A thin, flexible tube with a video camera and a light on the end will be passed into your child's nose and down the back of their throat to see their voice box. Your child will need to sit very still for this. It's sometimes easier if they sit on your lap and have their head held gently. When the camera is in place your child will be asked to make some sounds and say some words.

The video camera records your child's vocal folds moving, and this can be seen on a screen. The therapist and surgeon will discuss the video and decide on a management plan while you are there. You and your child can watch the video too.

## Benefits of this investigation

It is important to look at your child's voice box when they are talking, to make sure the right diagnosis is made. It can also help you and your child understand their voice problem, and make sure the management plan is right.

## Will the camera hurt?

The camera might cause some discomfort but it should not hurt. The numbing spray will help. If your child has a strong gag reflex, it can feel more uncomfortable.

Children find it easier if they have your encouragement, are relaxed, and keep breathing normally.

## Are there any risks?

In rare cases, some people have reported a feeling of light-headedness, nose bleeds or coughing and spasm of the vocal folds. These feelings should not last for more than 1 to 2 minutes. This happens in less than 1 in every 100 people.

## Are there any other ways of getting this information?

There is no other way to get this level of information about your child's voice box and vocal folds. If your child gets upset, they will need to wait and be seen when they are a bit older. Sometimes another procedure (microlaryngobronchoscopy) is needed. This would be done under a general anaesthetic.

## How long will the appointment be?

The appointment will last about 45 minutes, but the time the camera is in your child's nose is only a few minutes.

## Next steps

What happens after the appointment depends on what we find. Your child may need to see the speech and language therapist again for some advice or therapy. This might be with us or your local speech and language therapist. Your child may need to try taking some medicine, or make changes to the way they look after and use their voice. In rare cases your child might need surgery.

A clinic report, containing photographs taken from the video, will be sent to you after the appointment. Copies will also be sent to your GP and any other professionals involved in your child's care.

## Tips to help prepare your child

- Talk positively about the appointment.
- Tell them what will happen. They will have a spray up their nose, and need to keep still like a statue. Tell them that there will be an amazing, tiny, magic camera on the end of a thin, flexible tube that will be able to see inside their body. Some children find it fun when the tube is described as 'a piece of black spaghetti'.
- Reassure your child that the camera will not be in their nose for very long.
- Try to keep calm as your child will pick up on any anxieties that you might have.
- Explain that afterwards they can show the photos in the report to their family and friends if they want to.
- Bring your child's usual drink as this can help to take away the taste of the nasal spray.

If your child has a cold, cough or sore throat on the day of your appointment, you will need to re-arrange the appointment for another time. Please contact the hospital as soon as possible to do this (contact details are at the end of this leaflet).

## Useful sources of information

**The British Voice Association**, **web:** [www.britishvoiceassociation.org.uk/free.htm](http://www.britishvoiceassociation.org.uk/free.htm)

**Royal College of Speech and Language Therapists**,  
**web:** <https://www.rcslt.org/about/introduction>

Search on YouTube for 'Operation Ouch vocal cords' for a video about how the vocal cords work, and a nasendoscopy which is very similar to the procedure your child will have,  
**web:** [www.youtube.com/watch?v=GDzclZDdxqs](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GDzclZDdxqs)

## Contact us

If you need to re-arrange your child's appointment or have questions about the voice clinic, please contact the ENT appointments team, **phone:** 020 7188 4000.

For more information on conditions, procedures, treatments and services offered at our hospitals, please visit **web:** [www.evelinalondon.nhs.uk/leaflets](http://www.evelinalondon.nhs.uk/leaflets)

## Evelina London Medicines Helpline

If you have any questions or concerns about your child's medicines, please speak to the staff caring for them or contact our helpline, **phone:** 020 7188 3003, Monday to Friday, 10am to 5pm  
**email** [letstalkmedicines@gstt.nhs.uk](mailto:letstalkmedicines@gstt.nhs.uk)

## Your comments and concerns

For advice, support or to raise a concern, contact our Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS), **phone:** 020 7188 8801 **email:** [pals@gstt.nhs.uk](mailto:pals@gstt.nhs.uk). To make a complaint contact the resolution department **phone:** 020 7188 3514 **email:** [complaints2@gstt.nhs.uk](mailto:complaints2@gstt.nhs.uk)

## Language and accessible support services

If you need an interpreter or information about your care in a different language or format, please contact the department your appointment is with.

## NHS 111

This service offers medical help and advice from fully trained advisers supported by experienced nurses and paramedics. Available over the phone 24 hours a day, **phone:** 111  
**web:** [www.111.nhs.uk](http://www.111.nhs.uk)

## NHS website

This website gives information and guidance on all aspects of health and healthcare, to help you take control of your health and wellbeing, **web:** [www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk)

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