

## Tufts Medical Center

### **VIDEO STROBE VOICE EVALUATION: INFORMATION FOR PATIENTS**

#### **What is a video strobe voice evaluation?**

A video strobe voice evaluation is a test in which video pictures are taken of your voice box (larynx). The pictures are stored on a computer.

#### **Why is a video strobe voice evaluation performed?**

The most common reason that patients are sent for this test is hoarseness in the voice. Other reasons are pain when talking, dryness in the throat, sudden voice change, or throat injury. By looking at the pictures of the voice box, the doctor gets valuable information about what may be causing the problem.

#### **What happens during the test?**

There are two methods that are used to get the pictures of your voice box. In some patients, both methods are used. In other patients, one is enough.

- **Looking through the mouth** – In this method, a tube about ¼” wide and 7” long is placed in the back of your mouth. (If needed, a spray will be used on the back of the throat to prevent gagging). The person doing the exam holds your tongue gently with a piece of gauze and you say “eeee”. Video pictures are taken, and then the tube is removed. The procedure is then repeated several times until there are enough pictures. Each time the tube goes in your mouth, it stays for about 15-20 seconds. The time needed to get enough pictures is about 5 minutes or less.
- **Looking through the nose** – This method sometimes gives a better picture of how the voice actually works while you talk, sing, or whistle. An anesthetic spray is used in the nose and the back of the throat to reduce any discomfort. A very thin bendable tube is then placed in your nose and down your throat. You will say “eeee”, talk, and sing (if you are a singer). You may also be asked to whistle or to clear your throat. Video pictures are taken as you perform these activities. This method takes about 3 minutes. The tube stays in the nose until all the pictures are taken.

#### **What will I feel?**

If we are looking in the nose we use an anesthetic spray to the nose and the back of the throat. Sometimes we use the spray when looking through the mouth as well if there is discomfort associated with gagging. As the spray is applied, you feel a slight burning. Then your throat will feel numb for about 20-30 minutes. This is an odd sensation, but it

is not painful. You might have a little difficulty swallowing, which also feels strange. As the tube is put into your mouth of throat, there may be some mild discomfort, but no pain. The tube is in for a very short period.

### **Who performs a video strobe voice evaluation?**

The evaluation is done by a speech therapists specializing in voice problems. The therapist receives special training to do this test.

### **How do I prepare for this test?**

A visit for a video strobe evaluation test takes about 30-45 minutes. Some patients are scheduled for other voice tests at the same time, and these visits can take up to an hour and a half.

### **How will I feel after the test?**

You should feel like your usual self after the test. There is no discomfort.

- **If you have had anesthesia sprayed to the throat, it is important that you do not eat or drink until the effects of the spray have worn off. This is usually about 20-30 minutes.**

### **How will I learn the results of my video strobe voice evaluation?**

- An ENT (Ear, Nose, and Throat) doctor views all the videos on the day of the evaluation (if the video strobe is performed during voice clinic) while you are present.
- If the video strobe is performed at another time, the doctor will view your video during voice clinic.
- After the doctor views the video, if you are not present for the results, you will arrange another visit with the examiner to discuss the result and any recommendations.
- A written report will also be sent to your primary care physician and any other professionals you specify (you must sign a release).
- You may be asked to schedule an appointment with your doctor to discuss the results further.