

Vocal Cord Dysfunction

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Vocal cord dysfunction is a breathing problem that happens when your vocal cords close when you breathe. This keeps air from going into your lungs normally and causes shortness of breath. Speech therapy can easily treat it.

This condition sometimes looks like asthma, but it is not. However, if you have asthma you can also have vocal cord dysfunction.

Your doctor wants you to see a speech pathologist. They will talk with you about your breathing problem.

You may also have a special test called a videolaryngoscopy. This lets your speech pathologist see how your vocal cords move and create a treatment plan that will improve your breathing.

The appointment takes 60 to 90 minutes.

Before the Appointment

- You do not need to prepare.
- You may eat and drink as you wish.
- Arrive 15 minutes early to fill out any paperwork.

During the Appointment

- The speech pathologist will talk with you about your breathing problem.
- If your doctor and speech pathologist want you to have a videolaryngoscopy, the speech pathologist will explain this to you.
- What will happen during the videolaryngoscopy:
 - You may receive a spray of numbing medicine and a decongestant spray in your nose for your comfort.

Your Appointment

Date: _____

Time: _____ a.m. / p.m.

Location: _____

Videolaryngoscopy: yes no

Phone number: _____

(Please call if you have to cancel.)

- The speech pathologist will gently insert a thin, flexible scope through your nose to look at your vocal folds. It will go to the back of your throat.
- You will be asked to say different things, like “E” and count aloud.
- The images from the scope are seen on a computer screen and recorded.
- You will get to watch the images so you can see how your vocal cords are moving. The speech pathologist will explain what you are watching.
- The scope will be in your nose for just a few minutes before it is removed.

After the Appointment

- If you had a videolaryngoscopy, your speech pathologist will review the results with you.
- They will talk with you about treatment options.

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