THYROPLASTY (PARAGLOTTIC IMPLANT)

Purpose:

This is a procedure designed to physically push the vocal cord towards the midline (middle). Patients that are candidates for this procedure often have weakness of one or both of the vocal cords. In this situation, the voice can be weak and breathy because the weak vocal cord is unable to contact the strong one and provide a good seal during speaking. Pushing the vocal cord over helps to reform the seal necessary for an effective voice. This procedure should strengthen your voice and make it more effective; it should not appreciably change your vocal pitch. It **may** improve swallowing as well.

Procedure:

This procedure is typically performed under local anesthesia with sedation from an anesthesiologist. A small (1 1/2 to 2 1/2 inch) incision is made horizontally above the voice box. The cartilage of the voice box is opened through a small window so that the underside of the vocal cord can be seen. You are then asked to speak while the doctor manipulates the tissue to optimize your voice. Following this measurement, an implant is custom made for you and your specific anatomy and problem. The implant is secured into place so it doesn't move. Silastic, a medical grade siliconized plastic, is the material generally used for the implant. It has been well tolerated in many thousands of procedures. The implant is placed in such a way that you will never know it is there - you won't be able to see it or feel it under the skin.

Following placement of the implant, the doctor will look at your vocal cords through a telescope to evaluate the procedure. After this, the incision is closed and a dressing is placed. A small drain is usually placed in the wound. It is removed the next day. You may or may not be admitted to the hospital overnight, depending on your doctor's recommendations.

Recovery:

Stitches are removed in about a week. Because of swelling that occurs with this operation, it may take between two and six weeks for your voice to improve. Your doctor may give you steroid medicines to hasten the healing process and decrease the amount of postoperative swelling. You may also receive antibiotics and pain medicines to go home with.

You will have a sore throat for a few days after the procedure -you should not have a severe amount of pain. Most patients can resume a normal diet within one day of the procedure. You may return to work as soon as you feel able to, although heavy lifting should be avoided for three weeks. You should not overuse your voice. Stop talking if your voice gives out. Voice use itself will not damage the outcome of the surgery, but it may lengthen the healing period.

Risks and Complications:

- Any time a procedure is done involving the vocal cords there is the potential for scarring of the vocal cord. This could lead to worsening of the voice. Permanent hoarseness is not common, but still is a potential complication of the surgery.

- Any time an instrument is passed into the mouth there is a risk of chipping a tooth or knocking a tooth loose. This is a very uncommon complication.

- If a laser is used, there is the chance that the laser can damage areas in the lungs or even cause a fire. This is a very rare complication.

We ask that you sign below to indicate that you have read, understand, and accept the risks and complications of this operation. Alternative treatments have been discussed with me and I want to go ahead with the surgery.