

## **Recovering from your vocal cord surgery**

You are just about to, or have just had, an operation on your vocal cords. To get maximum benefit from the operation there are a few rules you need to follow in the early stages afterwards.

### **Complete voice rest**

- For the first three days after the operation, I recommend that you do not speak at all. Do not even whisper. Communicate by writing notes or gesture with your hands. You can also use text messaging or emails.
- If you are a professional voice user, eg. Teacher I suggest you try to stay quiet for five days after the operation. This will allow some healing time, before you put your vocal cords under any strain at all.

### **Can I eat and drink as normal?**

- You can eat and drink normally. However, as usual, keep caffeine intake levels to a minimum. If you suffer from acid reflux or indigestion, take your normal medication and avoid foods that you know do not agree with you.
- Try not to clear your throat, but swallow with or without water.
- Make sure you drink plenty of water, aim for eight glasses of water a day to keep your voice box hydrated. You may feel very dry in your mouth and throat after your surgery because of the anaesthetic and the surgery, itself. This should improve after a few days.
- Avoid smoking and drinking alcohol during your three/five days of voice rest and avoid spending time in places where others are smoking.

### **What do I do after my period of voice rest?**

- After your three/five days of complete voice rest, start talking at a pitch and volume that is always comfortable and feels effortless.
- Do not push or strain to talk. In most instances, your voice may be hoarse for a period after your surgery and this is to be expected whilst swelling is present.
- Do not try to shout or sing until dr Vermaak tells you it is safe to do so.
- If you have seen a speech therapist before your surgery wait two weeks before seeing her again.
- Voice exercises will be given to make you more aware of how to use your voice better.