

Voice Box Surgery

Post-operative Information



The Department of Ear, Nose & Throat (ENT) - Head & Neck Surgery provides a wide range of surgical services for adult patients with ENT, head and neck diseases. Patients are referred from polyclinics, general practitioners, emergency services or transferred from other departments within the Ng Teng Fong General Hospital or other healthcare facilities, including nursing homes, community and other hospitals. Our team of highly-trained ENT-Head & Neck surgeons and allied healthcare professionals aim to provide the best possible care to our patients.



What to expect after surgery

- It is normal to feel tired in the first week. Most patients require at least two weeks to recover. Every patient is different. Some may return to work or school sooner.
- Your throat may feel sore for a few days, but the pain is usually minimal. Sometimes your tongue may feel sore or numb for up to a week. This is due to pressure exerted by the metal laryngoscope on your tongue during surgery.
- Your voice may be hoarse for two to three weeks.
- You may experience mild pain when you swallow for up to a week.

Diet

You may have cool liquids immediately after your surgery.

- **First to fifth day:**

Take only liquids or soft food such as porridge, soup, noodles, scrambled eggs, oatmeal, yoghurt, smoothies, mashed potatoes and ice cream. These are usually well tolerated. Anything that has a hard edge (toast, chips, biscuits), is difficult to chew (steak), deep-fried or spicy should be avoided, as this is likely to cause pain when you swallow.



- **Fifth day onwards:**

You may eat and drink anything that does not cause pain when you swallow.

- Drink plenty of fluids as dehydration is harmful to your vocal chords. Avoid coffee and any drink that contains caffeine for at least one week after your surgery as it can cause acid reflux and dehydration.



Activity

Stay at home for the first two days after surgery. Avoid lifting, straining or heavy exercise for the first week after surgery. You may return to work or school two weeks after surgery.



Voice rest

Avoid excessive voice usage, throat-clearing and coughing as this can prevent proper healing of the voice box. Use an unvoiced “uh-uh-uh” to cough or to clear mucus from the voice box in the first week.

- **First to fourth day:**
Absolute voice rest (no speaking, singing or laughing).
- **Fifth to 14th day:**
Exercise voice discretion and speak normally without yelling, screaming or singing. You should not speak for extended periods of time.

*Your surgeon will advise you on when you can return to normal voice use.

Patient is
required to
rest their
voice



Medication

- Do not use aspirin for two weeks as it increases the possibility of bleeding. Please note that some painkillers can cause drowsiness. Patients who take these painkillers should not operate machinery, drive or make important decisions.
- You will be prescribed medication to prevent acid reflux from your stomach to your throat. Please take the medication one hour before your meals.
- Please complete the course of antibiotics prescribed to you.
- Occasionally, oral steroids (prednisolone or dexamethasone) are prescribed to reduce swelling. Do not take this medication on an empty stomach.

Please go to the Emergency Department if you experience:

- Difficulty breathing
- Noisy breathing
- Severe sore throat
- Difficulty swallowing
- A fever that is higher than 38°C

For more information

Ng Teng Fong General Hospital and Jurong Community Hospital

1 Jurong East St 21, Singapore 609606

www.ntfgh.com.sg | www.jch.com.sg

Clinic opening hours

Monday – Friday: 8.30am – 5.30pm

Saturday: 8.30am – 12.30pm (Selected clinics only*)

Dental Clinic: Monday – Thursday: 8.00am – 5.30pm, Friday: 8.00am – 5.00pm

*Please refer to our websites for more details.

General enquiries & appointments

General enquiries line: 6908 2222 (24-hr)

Fax: 6716 5500 | Email: contactus@nuhs.edu.sg

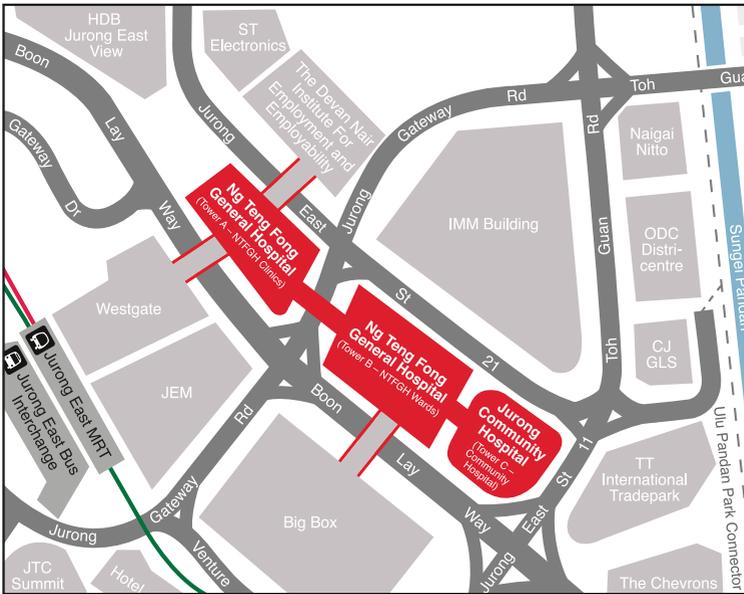
Appointment line: 6908 2222 (Monday – Friday: 8.00am – 5.30pm, Saturday: 8.00am – 12.30pm)

Fax: 6716 2200 | Email: appointment@nuhs.edu.sg

Dental appointment line: 6716 2233 (Monday – Friday: 8.00am – 5.30pm)

Fax: 6716 2200 | Email: JHCampus_Dental@nuhs.edu.sg

Getting there



By train

Alight at Jurong East MRT Station

By bus

Jurong East Bus Interchange

41, 49, 51, 52, 66, 66B, 78, 78A, 79, 79A, 97, 97E, 98, 98M, 105, 143, 143M, 160, 160A, 160M, 183, 183B, 197, 333, 334, 335, 506

Along Boon Lay Way

49, 99, 333, Private bus service 625, 990

Disclaimer:

The information in this brochure is meant for educational purposes and should not be used as a substitute for medical diagnosis or treatment. Please seek your doctor's advice before starting any treatment or if you have any questions related to your health, physical fitness or medical condition. Information is accurate at the time of printing.