Restylane Treatment for Vocal Cord Problems

This handout gives you information about an injection treatment called Restylane. This injection may be given to help with breathing or voice and swallowing problems.

What is Restylane?
Restylane is a gel like material that can be used to help your vocal cords work better. Restylane contains hyaluronic acid, which is a natural material found in the soft tissues under the skin and in other areas of the body.

How does Restylane help vocal cord problems?
The vocal cords are tiny bands of muscle inside the larynx or “voice box”. Vocal cords vibrate together to make sound. Your vocal cords also help you to clear your throat and cough. When your vocal cords do not work properly, you may have problems with your voice. This may happen because the vocal cords are weak, do not move like they should, or are bent or bowed. Over time, the muscles near the vocal cords can shrink (atrophy) and get weak. This may cause problems such as:

- Being unable to produce a strong enough cough to clear your throat
- A low, raspy or rough voice
- Hoarse voice all the time
- Problems with breathing
- Only being able to whisper when you talk
- Coughing or choking when swallowing

This handout is for informational purposes only. Talk with your doctor or health care team if you have any questions about your care.

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A Restylane injection acts like a space filler. The gel-like material is injected next to the vocal cords and into the muscles that support your vocal cords. This treatment helps to increase the size of your vocal cord(s) to lessen the gap between them so they touch each other, which may improve your voice and your ability to swallow and breathe.

What happens during the treatment?

- You will get instructions from your doctor about how to prepare for this treatment.
- On the morning of your treatment, you may take your regular medicines with a sip of water.
- Do not eat or drink two (2) hours before your scheduled Restylane treatment.
- Your treatment will be done in the clinic. You will be awake during the treatment and will be able to talk and breathe normally.
- A few minutes before the treatment is given, the doctor will use a medicine to help numb the area that will be treated.
- You will sit in a chair for the injection and a fiber-optic camera called a laryngoscope will be placed in your nose.
- The scope will go down into your throat to let the doctor see your vocal cords. The injection of Restylane is given near your “Adam’s apple” on your neck.
- It takes about 15 minutes to complete this procedure.
- The benefits from the Restylane treatment normally last three to six months or sometimes longer.

What happens after the treatment?

- Unless, your doctor gives you other directions, you will be able to eat, drink and talk right after your treatment.
- You may have some mild discomfort or pain that goes from your throat to your ear.
- If your pain continues or gets worse, call the clinic or the after-hours number provided to you after the procedure.
- Your doctor will give you more information about any follow-up appointments needed after your treatment.
When should I call the doctor?

Call the doctor right away if you have any of the following:

- Non-life threatening breathing problems
- Trouble with swallowing that lasts after the numbness has gone away