Electrolarynx

An electrolarynx is a small device used to help you talk after a total laryngectomy. This device is hand held and powered by batteries.

How to Use an Electrolarynx

Neck or Cheek Type:

- The neck or cheek device is about the size of a small flashlight. It fits easily into a pocket or purse when you are not using it.

- The device is held against your neck or cheek. When you press a button on the device it vibrates and makes a humming or buzzing sound. The vibration sound goes through the neck or cheek and to the mouth. The tongue, lips and teeth shape the sound into words.

- It is normally easy to learn how to use this device, but it does require practice. A person with a lot of scar tissue on the neck (from radiation or surgery) may not be able to use this type of device.

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Oral Type:

- The oral adaptor is a plastic tube that looks like a straw and covers the top of a hand held device. The vibration of sound (humming) travels through the tube into the mouth where the tongue and teeth shape the sound into words.
- It is normally easy to learn how to use this device, but it does require practice. It fits easily into a pocket or purse when you are not using it.
- The oral adaptor on an electrolarynx is used soon after surgery, and if you have a lot of scar tissue.

Tips for Using Your Electrolarynx

- Keep a good seal on your neck or cheek
- When you use the oral adaptor, keep it in the same place in your mouth (on the tongue or the inside of your cheek)
- Speak clearly and keep natural pauses and phrasing
- Do not speak too quickly or too slowly
- Only turn on the vibration when you are speaking
- Always carry a spare battery
- Clean the surfaces of the device with a clean, damp cloth

Talk to your doctor or others on your health care team if you have questions. You may request more written information from the Library for Health Information at (614) 293-3707 or email: health-info@osu.edu.