

Department of Speech and Language Therapy

Speech and Language Therapy referral (voice)

You have been referred to the Speech and Language Therapy department by the Ear, Nose and Throat department. This information sheet will explain how Speech and Language Therapy may be able to help you and what you can expect from your first appointment.

1. Why have I been referred to Speech and Language Therapy?

You have been seen by the Ear, Nose and Throat Department (ENT), as you have been experiencing some or all of the following symptoms:

- Changes to your throat
- Changes to the sound of your voice
- Difficulties with using your voice.

The ENT team feel that you could benefit from an assessment and advice from a Speech and Language Therapist.

Speech and Language Therapists are trained to assess and treat voice problems by providing advice and/or therapy to improve the health and function of your throat and larynx (voice box).

2. What can I expect from my first appointment?

Your Therapist will take a detailed case history, to identify the factors which may be contributing to the changes in your voice and throat. Difficulties with voice production can be caused by a number of factors to do with your health, lifestyle, emotional wellbeing, relationships and occupation. Your Therapist will discuss these areas with you.

You may be asked to perform a series of vocal tasks, which will be recorded, to enable your Therapist to analyse how your voice is working. These will be demonstrated by your Therapist.

Sometimes a physical examination of your neck and larynx will be undertaken, to assess how your muscles are functioning.

Your Therapist will be able to explain how the voice is produced and the reasons why you are experiencing difficulties with your voice. You will be given advice on how to look after your voice and throat to keep them healthy. If your Therapist feels you will benefit from therapy for your voice, this will be discussed with you.

Sometimes it may take more than one appointment to cover the above.

3. How can speech therapy improve my voice?

You may just need advice on how to care for your throat, larynx and voice to prevent further problems occurring.

If voice therapy is indicated, your Therapist will discuss the areas to be targeted. Therapy for the voice involves reducing the factors which are contributing to your voice difficulties and modifying the way your voice is produced. Your Therapist will demonstrate the relevant exercises, providing you with the opportunity to practise them, whilst supporting you in developing your technique. You will be expected to continue practising your exercises at home before your next appointment. Your Therapist will advise on how often they should be completed.

4. How long will my appointment last?

Your first appointment will usually last about one hour. As previously mentioned, sometimes it will be necessary to have two appointments to cover the items described under section two.

5. What happens after my first appointment?

If you are to have therapy, your Therapist will book your next appointment. Therapy may be in a group setting or individual setting depending on your needs. Details of either group or individual therapy will be given to you at the end of your first appointment.

6. When can I expect to see changes to my voice?

This will vary depending on the type of voice problem you have, the causal and contributing factors and your commitment to following the advice and exercises given by your Therapist.

Some people notice changes to their throat and/or voice after a few appointments but for others where altered voice production is well established, it is likely to take longer.

Your ability to commit to following the advice and exercises given by your Therapist is very important and progress will not be seen unless you follow the instructions given. If you are finding any advice or exercises difficult to implement, it is important that you let your Therapist know, as they can often be adapted.

If you have any questions about your appointment, you can either discuss these when you attend for your appointment, or you can speak to a Speech and Language Therapist on 01223 216200 (Monday to Friday).



We are currently working towards a smoke-free site. Smoking is only permitted in the designated smoking areas.

For advice and support in quitting, contact your GP or the free NHS Stop Smoking helpline on 0800 169 0 169

Help with this leaflet:



If you would like this information in another language, large print or audio format, please ask the department to contact Patient Information: 01223 216032 or

patient.information@addenbrookes.nhs.uk



Document history

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