

Laryngoscopy And Pharyngoscopy

What Is It?

Laryngoscopy and pharyngoscopy are medical procedures used to examine the larynx (voice box) and pharynx (throat) respectively, using specialised instruments called laryngoscopes and pharyngoscopes. These procedures help healthcare professionals diagnose and evaluate various conditions affecting the throat and voice box, such as vocal cord issues, infections, tumours, and swallowing disorders.

What Are The Surgical Approaches?

Laryngoscopy and pharyngoscopy can be performed through different approaches:

1. **Direct Laryngoscopy/Pharyngoscopy:** In this approach, a laryngoscope or pharyngoscope is inserted directly into the throat, allowing the healthcare provider to visualise the structures in real time. This technique is often used for diagnostic purposes and to obtain tissue samples (biopsies) if necessary.
2. **Flexible Fiberoptic Laryngoscopy/Pharyngoscopy:** This approach involves using a thin, flexible tube with a camera (fiberoptic scope) that can be inserted through the nose or mouth and threaded down into the throat. The images are transmitted to a monitor, allowing the healthcare provider to see the internal structures without direct contact.

What Does It Involve?

During laryngoscopy or pharyngoscopy, the patient is typically seated or lying down. The procedure can be done in an outpatient setting and often requires local anaesthesia or numbing agents to reduce discomfort. If a rigid scope is used, a small camera-equipped tube is inserted through the mouth, allowing the healthcare provider to examine the larynx or pharynx directly. In the case of a flexible fiberoptic scope, the tube is gently inserted through the nose or mouth, and the images are displayed on a monitor.

During the procedure, the healthcare provider assesses the health of the vocal cords, tissues, and structures within the throat. Biopsies or other interventions can be performed if needed.

How To Prepare?

Preparation for laryngoscopy or pharyngoscopy varies depending on the type of procedure and the specific instructions of the healthcare provider. Generally, you may be advised to avoid eating or drinking for a certain period before the procedure, and you might need to discuss any medications you are taking with your healthcare team.

How Long Does It Take?

The duration of laryngoscopy and pharyngoscopy can vary based on the purpose of the procedure and the complexity of the case. On average, these procedures typically last between 5 to 15 minutes.

What Happens After?

After the procedure, you might experience some temporary discomfort, such as a sore throat or mild irritation, which usually resolves quickly. Your healthcare provider will discuss the findings of the examination with you and provide any necessary recommendations or treatments based on the results. In some cases, further testing or interventions might be required.