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## **WHAT IS A LARYNGOSCOPY & BRONCHOSCOPY?**

Laryngoscopy is the inspection of the voice box or larynx and a bronchoscopy is the examination of the breathing tubes (the windpipe, and its branches) between the voice box and the lungs. Very commonly the nose and the throat are inspected at the same time. These tests help the doctor better understand and treat your child's breathing problem.

### **Who needs the procedure?**

Laryngoscopy and bronchoscopy will be done to find an explanation for noisy, labored breathing. Also, it allows the doctor to identify reasons for cough, husky voice and treat if possible the causes. Quite commonly it helps recover foreign objects that children have swallowed by accident. Lastly, the doctors use it to find explanations for swallowing problems.

### **How is the procedure done?**

The procedure is done under general anesthesia. As well, the throat is sprayed with local freezing. The doctor may use two types of instruments to do this; flexible and/or rigid scopes. The flexible scope is a small, bendy tube that can be passed through a child's nose or throat. The flexible tube carries optical fibers that transmit light that helps in examining the dark body tubes and cavities. A video camera is also attached to capture still photographs or videos. The rigid bronchoscope is a metallic, hollow firm tube, through which a telescope is threaded. This allows your doctor to look, while air and oxygen are pumped into the lungs of the sleeping child. It has a similar set of optical fibers and an attached camera, only that it allows higher detail to be seen and recorded. Sometimes a microscope is also used to free both hands of the doctor for better command of the operation.

### **What are the possible complications?**

Laryngoscopy and bronchoscopy are usually safe procedures. Some possible complications include:

- The risk that the metal tubes may chip your child's teeth. This is rare.
- Sometimes the child's cough sounds like a bark for a day or two.
- Others may sound wheezy for a few hours.
- Occasionally a surprise finding changes the plans and the doctor may advise to keep the child in hospital or more test or treatment.

**What should I expect after the operation?**

Your child may have a sore throat for a few days afterwards; this is because of the metal tube that may have been used for the procedure. The local freezing is used to reduce the throat discomfort, which usually lasts only a few hours. Once the local freezing goes away, your child can drink and eat or use his or her feeding tube. Before your child goes home, your nurse will check to make sure your child can swallow without any difficulties.