



FOUNDATION FOR VOICE RESTORATION

A not-for-profit, 501(C)3 charitable organization

Dear Fellow Laryngectomee,

Whether you are awaiting surgery, in post-operative care, or going thru the “stabilization” period of **Life After Laryngectomy**, you are probably faced with what seems to be a limitless number of questions regarding your medical situation, treatment procedures, family concerns, and lifestyle changes. Most of us have found that there are three main phases that you must and will achieve:

GET WELL !
GET VOICING !
GET LIVING !

The Foundation has assembled a Laryngectomee Recovery Kit to assist you, and your family, as you advance through these stages of the recovery process for **Life After Laryngectomy**. We provide these materials, and offer other recommendations for obtaining education and information, to enable you to make informed choices about your medical care; to help in communicating with your doctors, medical practitioners and caregivers; and to provide reassurance that you are not alone.

The “KIT” contains educational and instructional materials developed under the guidance of medical professionals, as well as selected insightful supplier catalogues, and a limited number of sample products. Attached is an outline of the materials, including video/DVD’s and manuals, that address most of the situations that you will encounter.

If you, a family member, or friend, has access to a computer, there is a wealth of information available. Many of us feel that the most valuable resource is an online organization called **WebWhispers** www.webwhispers.org. We recommend that you register, and explore this site as soon as possible. (It’s free and contains no commercial advertising!) The website hosts an extensive library, which holds the answers to as many as 80% of your questions as you move forward in your recovery. There is also an online list serve for posting your questions and responses, which is archived for continuous reference. **Log on, state your concern and “ask away”. You will find that there are very few situations that other Laryngectomees have not already encountered, and the members are most willing to share their experiences.**

If you are fortunate enough to have a **NEW VOICE** or **LOST VOICE** club in your area, we recommend that you join it (you can find a list of clubs affiliated with the International Association of Laryngectomees and their contact persons at the IAL website at www.larynxlink.com). They offer face-to-face peer support, education, and social functions designed to aid in your recovery. In addition to local organizations, there are several statewide groups that usually get together once a year for a more clinically-oriented and educational meeting, most with a “hands-on” problem solving segment by professionals. Look also for regional medical centers that sponsor continuing education workshops for Medical and Speech Pathology professionals that welcome Laryngectomee participants.

The most comprehensive annual national/international conference is the IAL (International Association of Laryngectomees) Annual Meeting, which is held in a different city each year. It features a social and educational program for Laryngectomees, as well as the annual business meeting of the organization. Coinciding with the IAL’s Annual Meeting is the Voice Institute. Laryngectomees who require assistance with their communication skills are assisted by the very best medical and clinical experts from around the globe. Speech pathologists and other health professionals advance their skills in working with head and neck cancer patients, and Laryngectomees who wish to gain in depth knowledge to serve as peer counselors also participate. Presentations and demonstrations feature the latest advances in Laryngectomee health care and speech technology techniques. Many vendors of items of interest to laryngectomees also are present. While it may be somewhat expensive to travel to state / regional or the IAL Voice Institute conferences, financial assistance is sometimes available, and the experience is always worthwhile.

As you will see illustrated throughout our materials, there is **Life After Laryngectomy**, so

GET WELL !
GET VOICING !
GET LIVING !

We hope that you will achieve these goals quickly, to then be in the most rewarding position of supporting your fellow Laryngectomee and the Laryngectomee community.

Take care, with warm regards,

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The Foundation for Voice Restoration is a not-for-profit organization funded exclusively thru private donations, sponsorships and grants.