CareTips

Topic 10: What to Do if Your VP Falls Out

What to do if your voice prosthesis falls out of the Tracheoesophageal Puncture (TEP).

Do not panic, assess the situation*

- 1. Are you having difficulty breathing?
 - If so, seek medical attention immediately
- 2. Is the voice prosthesis lost? Do you believe the voice prosthesis fell into your trachea (windpipe) and possibly into your lungs?
 - If so, seek medical attention immediately
- 3. Follow the instructions from your clinician and/or physician on what to do in this situation (listed below).
- 4. No matter what your situation, try not to swallow. Saliva can pass through the tracheoesphageal puncture, into your windpipe and down into your lungs causing you to cough.
- 5. Your puncture can close in a matter of hours to days. Once you follow your clinician and/or physician's instructions below, please contact them as soon as possible and let them know what has happened.
- 6. INSTRUCTIONS (to be completed in coordination with your clinician and/or physician):

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- **Tip:** Unless the puncture has closed naturally or is sealed by a catheter, you should still be able to talk by temporarily placing your thumb over your stoma opening and talking normally.
- **Tip:** As a laryngectomee, always carry identification that you or a caregiver can present to first responders or emergency room personnel telling them that you breathe through a stoma in your neck and not your nose and mouth. It may be helpful to carry a small illustration showing where your voice prosthesis would normally be in place.
- * If any problems are noticed that are not listed here, the patient should still take action. The reported incidence of Provox[®] voice prostheses falling out are rare.

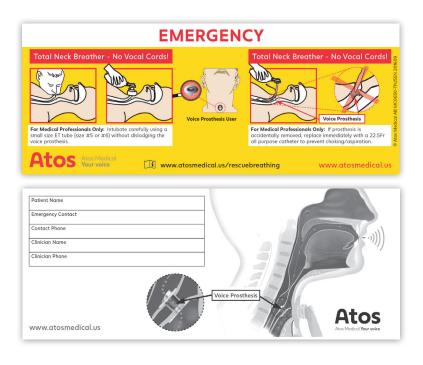


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Suggested items you should carry in the event your voice prosthesis is swallowed and not in your windpipe or lungs.

- 1. Suggested Items:
 - Water soluble lubricating jelly (Surgilube® or K-Y Jelly®)
 - Something to keep the puncture open like an all purpose catheter, per your clinician's instructions or prescription.
 - Medical Tape
 - Emergency Card
 - Mirror
 - Flashlight
 - Plastic blunt tip tweezers
 - Provox[®] Cleaning Towels



If you go to the Emergency Room, please bring this instruction sheet with you.

*Available through prescription only.



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