



# James P. Thomas, M.D. | **voicedoctor.net**

Physician & Surgeon – Practice Limited to Laryngology

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## Specializing In:

### Disorders of:

- hoarseness
- breathing
- swallowing
- singers
- actors
- speakers

### Procedures of:

- diagnostic stroboscopy
- digital laryngeal imaging
- laryngeal injections
- laser treatments
- vocal cord augmentation
- microlaryngoscopy
- nerve grafting
- vocal pitch surgery
- laser tumor resection

## Information for prospective patients

My area of special interest is laryngeal disorders – specifically problems with singing, speaking, breathing and swallowing since they often relate to the voice box. My qualifications for this sub-specialty practice in Ear, Nose & Throat Surgery (Otolaryngology) include a passionate interest in voice disorders, as well as extensive study beyond medical school, including a six –year residency-training program in Otolaryngology. I am certified by the American Board of Otolaryngology. I have traveled widely, studying under numerous other laryngologists (ENT doctors who specialize in throat disorders) in the US, Canada and in Europe. In addition, I completed a concentrated fellowship at Loyola University in Chicago studying under Robert Bastian, M.D.

## What to expect during your visit to my office

On average, I spend about one hour with new patients. This varies quite a bit depending on your needs and the complexity of your problem. Return appointments run about a half-hour, again depending on your needs. Many patients travel a great distance to see me, many have complex issues and I do, on occasion, get behind. While I try to spend whatever time necessary with each one of you, if the problem is quite complex we may need to schedule additional visits if it appears we will significantly delay other patients' appointments. We do ask for various ways of contacting you at the time of your initial appointment so that we can notify you if I am significantly behind in my appointments.

I use a three part examination which you will likely find different from your past interactions with Ear, Nose & Throat physicians. I start with the usual – a medical history. Likely you will have filled out some forms before your arrival and we will review these together focusing on your voice or laryngeal problem.

The second part of my exam involves listening to your voice. I will be asking you to use your low voice, high voice, a loud and soft voice and perhaps other vocal tasks, if needed. Listening to your voice under different situations allows me to focus on the characteristics of your voice problem. Even if your problem is not “acting up” on the day of your visit, I can usually determine the problem this way. And if your voice sounds “bad”, that is ok, it is what we are looking for.

The third part of the exam is looking at your voice box. This will usually involve looking with a video endoscope. I use a numbing spray medication on the nose, or the throat if needed, to prevent gagging. I pass the small camera through your nasal passage and record your vocal cords and their movement on videotape. With a special strobe light, we view the vocal cords in slow motion. This allows you and me to review any problems on videotape, several times if needed. Since the recording is digital we can look at each tiny movement with minimal distortion. I have found that this is the portion of the exam that patients are most frightened of, yet I perform this exam on five year old patients every week without difficulty. The worst part of the exam is either the taste of the numbing spray or the imagined possibilities in the mind, otherwise most patients become fascinated with what can be seen.

Through this comprehensive examination of the problem, including a history, together with how your voice sounds and how the vocal cords vibrate, allows for a precise and accurate diagnosis. I attempt to explain your problem in laymen's terms and show you how to deal with your problem most effectively. The outcome of treatment should be an improvement in your voice. For more detail on my examination see <http://www.voicedoctor.net/diagnose/exam.html>.

## Treatment Options

Treatment of voice disorders may involve voice therapy, an office procedure or a surgical procedure.

**Speech or Voice Therapy:** I have contacts with speech therapists throughout the city and state and can often arrange for therapy to be obtained locally for you. I can also call your therapist in your home state or area. I will monitor the progress of your therapy with return visits. Some common therapy options are listed at <http://www.voicedoctor.net/therapy/>

**Office Procedures:** I perform many procedures in the office, which is often quicker, more precise and quite a bit more cost effective for you than going to the operating room. At times surgical intervention is more appropriate.

**Surgical Procedures:** In order to accommodate the special care needed for the precise treatment of voice disorders, the hospitals I utilize have upgraded to state of the art surgical instruments and lasers. See <http://www.voicedoctor.net/surgery/>

**Botox injections:** I have been performing Botox injections into the larynx, neck and face since 1997. I will perform therapeutic as well as cosmetic injections.

**Lasers:** I have a CO<sub>2</sub> laser available for treatment of the vocal cords.

For those of you who travel, I have contacts with laryngologists and speech therapists throughout the country should you desire or need to see a voice specialist while journeying. I am also available toll free by phone (866) 766-1994 or email ([drthomas@voicedoctor.net](mailto:drthomas@voicedoctor.net)) during your travels.

Should you have any questions regarding your treatment, please feel free to contact my nurse, Jody, (she may be reached by phone or at [jody@voicedoctor.net](mailto:jody@voicedoctor.net)) or myself at any time and we would be happy to answer your questions.

I would highly recommend that you have a look at our web site (<http://www.voicedoctor.net>) as it has a great deal of information for you about your voice and larynx (voice box).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "James P. Thomas MD". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

James P. Thomas, M.D.