Radiesse voice injectable implant (Merz Aesthetics Inc.) for treatment of glottic insufficiency including vocal cord paralysis

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Authors' conclusions
The left and right vocal folds or cords are twin bands of muscle in the larynx that move apart from or towards each other to open or close the glottis (the space between them). The folds open the glottis during breathing and close it during speaking, coughing, or swallowing. Speech, or phonation, relies on the repeated and regular opening and closing of the glottis in response to expiratory air pressure. The ability of the vocal folds to close the glottis effectively also prevents foreign substances from entering the airway and allows a strong cough to remove mucus or foreign material. Glottic insufficiency is the inability of the vocal folds to close the glottis adequately, resulting in vocal abnormalities, shortness of breath while talking, and an inability to produce an adequate cough. This disorder frequently is caused by unilateral vocal cord paralysis (UVCP) but also may be caused by vocal fold paresis, atrophy, scar, sulcus, or deformation; presbylaryngis; or nerve or muscle disorders. Treatment for glottic insufficiency includes voice therapy and surgery if therapy is inadequate, particularly thyroplasty or vocal fold injection (VFI). Thyroplasty entails making an incision in the neck, and inserting a permanent implant behind the affected vocal fold. The implant acts as a shim and pushes the vocal fold toward the middle of the glottis for better glottic closure. VFI works by a similar principle but is less invasive. It involves injecting a bulking agent into the affected vocal fold to augment the fold sufficiently to allow it to meet the opposing vocal fold, known as medializing.

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