

Continuous Laryngoscopy with Exercise

If you are having breathing difficulty limiting your ability to exercise or participate in sports, we can help.

A common cause is exercise induced laryngeal obstruction (EILO) where the upper airway (larynx) narrows during exertion. Cayuga Medical Center Sports Medicine and Athletic Performance is one of the few locations in the world that is able to properly test for EILO. We work in collaboration with your primary care doctor and/or asthma doctor to solve your breathing problems.

What is Continuous Laryngoscopy with Exercise (CLE)?

A continuous laryngoscopy during exercise test (CLE) is a procedure that allows us to look at your larynx while you are exercising. We insert a thin, flexible tube with a light and a camera lens at the end (called a laryngoscope) through your nose to the back of your mouth and secure the scope via a helmet as shown in the picture below. During exercise we record a video of your upper airway and visualize it on a screen simultaneously.



Why do I need a CLE test?

Without visualization of the upper airway during exercise, we do not know what is actually occurring. Studies have found that basic breathing tests such as spirometry and visualizing the upper airway before and after exercise (but not during exercise) are not accurate. EILO is a heterogeneous collection of upper airway narrowing and seeing exactly what occurs can impact treatment recommendations.

How are CLEs performed?

We will use an analgesic spray to numb your nostril before we pass the scope gently to the back of your throat. The laryngeal scope is attached to headgear so you can exercise comfortably. We will then ask you to use a stationary bike or treadmill. You can stop at any time. We monitor oxygen levels in your blood and breath, as well as heart rate.

How much exercise is required during testing?

The goal is to exercise at a sufficient intensity to provoke symptoms. EILO usually occurs at maximum

workload. You can stop the exercise at any time if you feel uncomfortable. Our exercise physiologists and Dr. Getzin will supervise the test.

How should I prepare for my CLE?

- If you take medications for asthma (such as inhalers), please continue to use them as advised by your physician and bring them with you on test day.
- Please come to your appointment with exercise attire and running shoes. Please avoid sports bras with metal and/or wires because they can limit our ability to evaluate your heart electrical activity with exercise (an ECG).
- Do not eat a large meal for ~ 2hours prior to the test.
- Please tell us if you are unwell, recently injured, or feel that you may not be able to exercise.

Are there any risks in CLE testing?

The risks are extremely low and include soreness from the scope and light-headedness with passing the scope in some individuals. We take all the necessary precautions to make sure the test does not cause discomfort. We will stop the test if you have any chest pain, discomfort or dizziness.

When will I know the results?

We can usually discuss the results with you immediately after the test.

Can my CLE be done the same day as my initial office visit?

Sometimes. We prefer to review previous data obtained and evaluate patients on their first visit to determine what tests are indicated. However, for those patients who do not live close to Ithaca, NY, we can possibly make accommodations if we have reviewed medical records and communicate in advance.

What other tests can we perform?

While we defer to your asthma doctor. For those patients in need, we can perform an asthma provocation test to evaluate for exercise-induced asthma. We can also perform a cardiopulmonary exercise test. Our state of the art performance laboratory gives us the flexibility and precision to collect objective evidence needed to make an accurate diagnosis. We can provide your asthma doctor or your primary care doctor with the results to manage your care.

Who are the members of Cayuga Medical Center Shortness of Breath with Exercise Team?

- Andrew Getzin, MD - Director

Dr. Getzin is a board certified in Family Practice and Sports Medicine. He is head team physician for USA triathlon.

- Robert Strominger, MD - Otolaryngologist
- Anthony Spinelli - Athletic Trainer / Exercise Physiologist
- Adrian Western – Athletic Trainer / Exercise Physiologist / Practice Manager

How do I make an appointment?

Ideally, your primary care provider or asthma specialist will refer you to our office. We feel that the best care provided includes communication of the physicians involved in your care. For those individuals without physicians, they can call the office at 607-252-3580 or reach out to Anthony Spinelli, ATC, aspinelli@cayugamed.org.