

I am Dr. J. Mark Palmer. I am a board certified otolaryngologist here in Fort Worth, Texas. I was educated at Rice University and at the Baylor College of Medicine. Did my otolaryngology training at Baylor as well.

This concerns Greg Clifton. I examined Greg for some vocal dysfunction, after he had undergone a surgery to remove a solitary vocal nodule. He had a history of recurrent voice dysfunction probably due to his occupation at that time as an auctioneer. He had previously had an acute episode of laryngitis, had seen another physician who had prescribed some steroids and voice rest, he had a nice response to that. Approximately, two years subsequent he had another acute episode of loss of voice. Saw the same physician in Dallas, again diagnosed with vocal nodule. Only this time rather than recommending voice therapy and/or rest or steroids he took him to surgery where a biopsy was taken or excision of the vocal nodule. It was a benign pathology.

Subsequent to that he's had significant voice dysfunction, has seen other otolaryngologist other than myself and has little chance of having a permanent return of function. He went to San Antonio where he had a successful collagen injection. Vocal quality after the collagen injection was outstanding, but that is only a temporary maneuver. At this point he should be considered to be disabled from his occupation as an auctioneer, as there is very little that can be done to restore normal vocal contour to the laryngeal surface. The collagen only lasts a few weeks and is not a good option for continued treatment.

I believe the standard of care was breached when his voice surgery was performed without voice therapy. Particularly a professional voice user should not be subjected to indiscriminate laryngeal surgery. There was no clinical suspicion of a malignant process which would have justified the procedure. It did appear that this was the same nodulery that he had previously and his subsequent surgical procedure did render his larynx incompetent for his normal occupation as an auctioneer.

