

Video	Audio
Marty Kedian Patient Gina Kedian Marty's Wife Courtesy: Kedian Family	(nat sound)  Marty Kedian is a first-time grandfather. There's so much he longs to say to his granddaughter Charlotte, but he can't, after losing his voice following surgery to battle cancer.
April 10, 2023  Courtesy: Kedian Family	"A month after the surgery, I lost my voice. I just had my new granddaughter. I wanted to be able to talk to her. Sorry."
	In 2013, the Haverhill, Massachusetts man was diagnosed with a rare form of cancer in his larynx called chondrosarcoma. In 10 years, he underwent 14 surgeries. Finally, doctors told him the only option left was a laryngectomy, or removal of his voice box.
	"She knew I was depressed and out of my mind. She went online and said, 'There's got to be another way to fix this.' And she found Dr. Lott."
	(nat sound)
Phoenix	Almost 2,700 miles across the country, at Mayo Clinic in Phoenix, Arizona, Dr. David Lott was looking for that other way.  For almost two decades, Dr. Lott and his team have been researching laryngeal transplantation. In 2016, Mayo Clinic's Larynx and Trachea Transplant Program received approval to conduct the first known clinical trial investigating the procedure — a significant step forward in making the procedure a scientifically proven, safe and effective procedure for everyone.
David Lott, M.D. Larynx and Trachea Transplant Program Mayo Clinic	"What about all these people with larynx dysfunction who don't have this as an option? And my favorite question to ask is why? Why don't they have this option? We know this works here. We know that we need to get here. What are the

	steps we need to take? And that's what this clinical trial is about."
	An estimated 12,650 people will be diagnosed with laryngeal cancer in the U.S. this year. According to Dr. Lott, many will suffer loss of laryngeal function and their ability to speak, swallow and breathe on their own. Many, like Marty, also will be forced to rely on a tracheostomy tube to breathe, which Dr. Lott says drastically diminishes quality of life.
	"It's very socially awkward and socially embarrassing for people. So these patients become very reclusive. And I've had a lot of patients tell me, 'Yes, I may be living, but I'm not truly alive.'"
	One of the biggest challenges in advancing laryngeal transplantation as a viable option for cancer patients has been the use of immunosuppressive therapy, which transplant patients are given to suppress the body's immune system and reduce the risk of organ rejection. However, giving cancer patients immunosuppression also increases their risk of the cancer spreading. Marty was already on immunosuppression from a previous kidney transplant, allowing doctors to do his transplant without introducing additional risks.
	"Which now the rest of the world can look and say, 'Well, here we've done this transplant in cancer. How does this look? Can we now take this and safely take a much smaller step to more aggressive cancers?'"
	(Nat sound)
February 29, 2024	During the 21-hour procedure, a team of six surgeons first removed Marty's diseased larynx. With cancer margins negative and doctors confident the cancer was gone, they proceeded with transplanting the new donor larynx, thyroid and parathyroid glands — and in the back of the throat, the pharynx, upper parts of the esophagus

	and trachea, and an intricate network of blood vessels and nerves.
	(nat sound)
Video courtesy: Kedian Family March 2, 2024	Two days after surgery, Marty is up and around.
	(nat sound)
April 3, 2024	Four weeks later, Marty is discharged. His trach tube left in place while he regains the ability to breathe..
	(nat sound clapping)
	swallow..
	(nat sound)
	and finally, speak. All on his own.
	(nat sound)
	Four months after surgery, Marty's voice is already at 60%.
June 27, 2024	"Some broccoli and cheddar soup, English muffins."
	"Never in my wildest dreams would I expect him to be eating a hamburger at a little over three months after transplant. It just amazes me. And then from a breathing standpoint, same thing. I wouldn't have foreseen that happening for at least a year, if ever."
	It will take up to a year for Marty to regain full use of his voice. For now, he's grateful he has broken the silence, can finally speak with his granddaughter, and, after a 10-year battle, is finally cancer-free.
	"Don't give up. Don't give up. Never give up on life."
	For the Mayo Clinic News Network, I'm Marty Velasco Hames

