Anatomy of the Larynx The larynx is commonly known as the voice box as it houses the vocal folds that are responsible for sound production (phonation).Below the vocal folds the epithelium is pseudo stratified cil- iated columnar.The airway cavity of the larynx extends from a triangular shaped inlet at the epiglot- tis to a circular outlet inferior to the cricoid cartilage where it is continuous with the lumen of the trachea.The laryngeal skeleton consists of nine cartilages, three single (thyroid, cricoid, and epiglottis) and three paired (arytenoid, corniculate, and cuneiform), connected by membranes and ligaments.The vestibular and vocal folds divide the larynx into (1) the vestibule (upper chamber), located above the vestibular folds; (2) the ventricle, the small middle chamber located between the vestibular and vocal folds; and (3) the infraglottic cavity, which extends from the vocal folds to the lower border of the cricoid cartilage .It is found in the anterior neck, connecting the hypopharynx with the trachea, which extends vertically from the tip of the epiglottis to the inferior border of the cricoid cartilage .The paired laryngeal cartilages form part of the lateral and posterior walls of the larynx, which are: o The arytenoid cartilages- -two upward protrusions located at the back of the larynx.o The cuneiform cartilages--small elongated rod-like elastic cartilages located at the apex of each arytenoid cartilage, and at the base of the epiglottis above and anterior to the corniculate cartilage.It is shaped like a triangular shield and is usually larger in males than in females due to male sex hormones stimulating its growth during puberty.The arytenoid cartilages are attached to the cricoarytenoid muscles, an- chored by the cricoid cartilage and attached to the vocal cords.During swallowing of food, the epiglottis bends down and meets the corniculate cartilages to close off the pathway to the trachea.At the top of the larynx is the epiglottis which acts as a flap that closes off the trachea during the act of swallowing to direct food into the oesopha- gus instead of the trachea.The single laryngeal cartilages are: o The epiglottis--a leaf- shaped piece of elastic cartilage located at the top of the larynx.Two pairs of mucous membrane foldings stretch inward and horizontally across the larynx.Here mucociliary action directs mucous movement upward towards the pharynx, so that the mucous is continually being moved away from the lungs.It serves as a sphincter in transmitting air from the oropharynx to the trachea and also in creating sounds for speech.It is inferiorly anchored at one end between the back of the tongue and the anterior rim of the thyroid cartilage.o The thyroid cartilage (Adam's apple)--formed by the fusion of two cartilage plates and is the largest cartilage of the larynx.o The cricoid cartilage--a signet ring shaped cartilage so-called because the signet end forms part of the posterior wall of the larynx.o The corniculate cartilages--small and cone-shaped hyaline cartilages that sit on top of each of the arytenoid cartilages.The upper pair of folds are the vestibular folds (ventricular or false folds) which only play a minimal role in phonation but protect the more delicate folds below.They are attached posteriorly to the arytenoid cartilages, and anteriorly to the thyroid cartilage.The interior surface of the superior portion of the larynx is made up of .stratified squamous epithelium which is an area that is subject to food contact

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