

George Michael 'woke from coma with different accent'

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British singer George Michael has revealed that he woke from his three-week coma talking in the broad West Country accent spoken in western England.

London-born Michael, who almost died of pneumonia at the end of last year, said he was unable to revert to his usual accent for two days after gaining consciousness and his family feared he would be stuck with the new one forever.

"I swear this is true," the 49-year-old told London's LBC radio station on Tuesday. "I came out of my coma talking in this West Country accent."

Michael said that as he opened his eyes, doctors asked him if he knew who he was -- to which he replied, "King of the world?" in the distinctive West Country burr.

"The doctors were worried that I had this condition where some people wake up speaking French or some language they learned at school," he said.

[Foreign Accent Syndrome](#) is a rare medical condition in which people emerge from a [neurological injury](#) speaking in an entirely different accent.

In some cases, they speak fluently in a language they barely know.

"There's nothing wrong with a West Country [accent](#)," said the former star of the 1980s pop duo Wham!, "but it's a bit weird when you're from north London.

"My sisters, who were obviously so relieved that I'd actually woken up, were just laughing away at this stand up comedy."

Michael was forced to cut short his Symphonica tour last November after he was rushed to a hospital in the Austrian capital Vienna with a severe bout of pneumonia.

Arriving back in London last December, the "Careless Whisper" singer admitted it had been "touch and go" at times during the month he spent in hospital recovering from the [lung infection](#).

Speaking to BBC radio on Tuesday, he said Austrian doctors had "downplayed" his condition to avoid a "death watch kind of thing".

The seriousness of his illness did not become public until after his discharge from hospital.

"It's like I just dodged a bullet," he told the broadcaster, adding that he had a five-week gap in his memory from the illness and had to learn to walk again during his recovery.

He has since rescheduled his tour, and has invited 1,000 staff from the Vienna hospital to one of the shows.

His new single, "White Light", is about the near-death experience.

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