

Voice Care

Avoid voice strain. Avoid yelling, screaming and loud talking; talking over background noise or talking at very high or low pitches. Avoid singing at pitches or loudness levels outside your comfortable range. Avoid odd voices or vocal sounds such as animal or truck noises. Do not whisper!

Avoid persistent coughing or throat clearing. Take a sip of water when you feel like clearing your throat. Try to blow air across your vocal folds (“HAAA”) without actually allowing your voice to make a sound. Suck on sugarless lemon drops or hard candy, use medicated throat lozenges sparingly and in a temporary manner as they can reduce the sensitivity of your throat, causing you to do more harmful things to your throat. If you must cough, use a soft gentle cough with your breath instead of a hard, forceful cough with your voice. Break the habit of throat clearing, try a dry swallow instead or a sip of water.

Drink plenty of water. Drink 8-10 glasses of water per day. Use of steam or humidification systems (cleaned daily) can also help with moisture but the best hydration is achieved by taking in plenty of fluids

Avoid caffeine, alcohol and tobacco. Consume a maximum of two servings per day total. Stop smoking and avoid second hand smoke.

Rest your voice. Voice rest or voice “naps” can be helpful when your voice is tired or strained, or if you typically use your voice a lot. Whenever possible, try to use an easy soft voice (low volume and effort).

Treat acid reflux and heartburn. See your doctor and follow the instruction for changes in diet, eating habits, and medications.

Treat any colds or laryngitis seriously. Rest your voice. Use cough suppressants but avoid medicated lozenges as a ‘crutch’ to allow you to talk or sing through a cold. Do not push your voice to talk through a cold or laryngitis.

Watch for interactions between medications and your voice. Some medications can have side effects that influence the voice, most commonly those medications that dry you out. Talk to your doctor about your medications.

Stay healthy. Your voice responds to your overall physical and emotional health. Be sure you are taking care of all aspects of your health and get plenty of rest.

Do not ignore changes in your voice. If you experience hoarseness, pain, difficulty swallowing, or any other changes in your voice that persist for more than two weeks, you should see an otolaryngology's for evaluation.

Use good speaking technique. In general, speaking with an easy relaxed voice while using good breath support produces the best sound and healthiest voice. Your speech pathologist can help you learn these, and other healthy voicing techniques. You may benefit from formal voice therapy (like physical therapy for your voice), if you have a voice problem.



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