

Vocal Health Protocol

Maintaining Optimal Vocal Health

If possible, optimize environment where voice is used.

- Increase or decrease use of absorbent materials to modify acoustics of environment.
- Control or reduce levels of ambient noise in and around area.
- Optimize layout of area to support voice use (e.g., eliminate barriers).
- Maintain adequate ventilation and humidity in area.

Warm up voice before use by performing vocal function exercises below.

- Hold /ee/ softly at F above middle C for females and F below middle C for males (or at a comfortable mid-range speaking pitch if no piano is available) for as long as possible. Repeat 2 times.
- Glide from a comfortable *low* note to a comfortable *high* note on the word **/knoll/**. Repeat 2 times.
- Glide from a comfortable *high* note to a comfortable *low* note on the word **/knoll/**. Repeat 2 times.
- Sing up a five-note scale (C-D-E-F-G) on the syllable /oll/ in your mid-range. Repeat 2 times.

Maintain good speaking and good singing posture.

- Do not slouch or bend over when speaking or singing.
- Crouch, sit or stand erect when engaged in voice use.

Maintain good breath support when speaking.

Optimize voice production strategies.

- Use easy onset of voicing.
- Do not talk or sing above high ambient noise levels for extended periods of time.
- Avoid episodes of vocal projection (i.e., shouting, screaming) by using nonverbal cues.
- Implement short periods of voice rest (vocal naps) after extended episodes of voice use.
- Use amplification where and when necessary.
- Cease smoking.
- Avoid excessive coughing or throat clearing.
- Use breathing filter in presence of known allergens or irritants.

Maintain adequate laryngeal hydration.

- Consume one-half of your body weight in ounces of water daily.
- Consume warm, non-caffeinated liquids during extended periods of voice use.
- Use non-menthol or non-eucalyptus lozenges especially if liquid intake is difficult.
- Limit alcohol intake.

Watch your diet.

- Avoid spicy, acidic and dairy foods if you are sensitive to them.
- Reduce or eliminate caffeine intake, avoid mint.
- If diagnosed with laryngopharyngeal reflux disease (LPRD), follow treatment regimen as directed by your physician.
- Take medications as prescribed by physician.
- Modify diet to eliminate foods in categories listed above.
- Modify sleeping posture by elevating the head of the bed to help keep your head above the level of the stomach
- Eliminate alcohol intake.
- Nothing to eat or drink within three hours of going to bed.

Maintain physical fitness.**Obtain adequate rest each night.*****If Your Voice Is Complaining To You:*****Decrease levels of voice use.**

- Use amplification for vocal projection.
- Increase periods of voice rest (vocal naps) throughout the day if possible.

Modify environment where voice is used.

- Increase or decrease use of absorbent materials.
- Control or reduce noise levels in area.
- Optimize layout of area to support voice (e.g., eliminate barriers).
- Increase ventilation or humidification of area.

Modify use of speaking or singing voice.

- Absolutely no screaming or shouting.
- Warm up gently before voice use.
- Use easy onset of voicing.
- Avoid vocal projection.
- Use soft, breathy vocal quality during speaking.
- Maintain use of good breath support during speaking or singing.
- Use only mid-range during singing.
- Do not sing above mezzo-piano loudness level.
- Limit telephone use, or use a phone amplifier if necessary.
- Cover nose and mouth with a scarf during cold weather.
- Avoid known allergens and irritants or wear breathing filter when in the presence of either.
- No coughing or throat clearing.

Increase laryngeal hydration.

- Consume warm, non-caffeinated liquids during voice use.
- Use non-menthol or non-eucalyptus lozenges especially if liquid intake is difficult.
- Use a warm steam vaporizer at night.
- Eliminate alcohol and caffeine intake.
- Consume one-half of your body weight in ounces of water daily.

Cease smoking. Consult a physician if the voice problem does not resolve itself.