

VOCAL HYGIENE TIPS

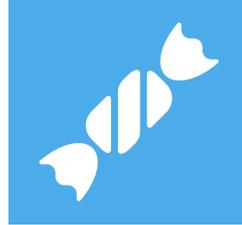
PROMOTE A MOIST ENVIRONMENT FOR YOUR VOICE



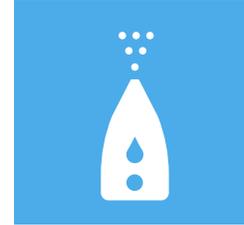
Drink plenty of water.



Breathe through your nose, not your mouth.



Use hard candies, non-mentholated cough drops or chewing gum to promote salivation.



Use a cold-mist humidifier to humidify the air, especially when sleeping.



Limit substances that may promote dryness or dehydration (such as caffeine, alcohol)

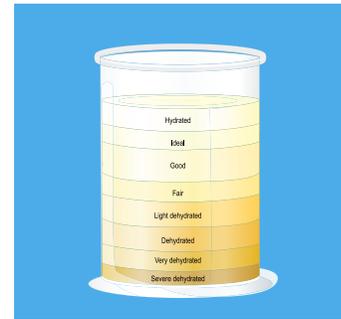
TIPS FOR STAYING HYDRATED



Follow each cup of coffee or alcoholic beverage with a glass of water.



Make sure to drink more water than usual if you are taking a medication that causes dryness, you are physically active or you are in a hot environment.



Monitor the color of your urine. (Pale yellow means you're hydrated, dark yellow means you're not hydrated.)

REDUCE VOCAL OVERUSE, MISUSE AND ABUSE



Overuse includes excessive talking or singing

- Try to take 10-15 minute "voice naps" throughout the day, particularly after periods of extended voice use
- Avoid nonessential voice use
- Use non-verbal communication when possible (email, text messaging, etc)



Misuse/abuse includes raising your voice or shouting

- Try to use non-verbal attention getters (clapping, whistle)
- Use amplification/microphone
- Move away from background noise
- Speak face to face



Avoid whispering. When your voice is tired, rest it instead of whispering.

REDUCE BEHAVIORS AND SUBSTANCES THAT IRRITATE YOUR LARYNX AND VOCAL FOLDS



Eliminate smoking.



Take steps to avoid acid reflux.

- Avoid certain foods such as caffeine, acidic foods (tomato, citrus), spicy foods, mint, alcohol, chocolate, carbonation, fried food
- Allow 2-3 hours after eating before lying down. You can also elevate the head of your bed 6-8 inches by adding blocks under the legs at the head of the bed
- May need medication for reflux



Eliminate habitual coughing and throat clearing.

- Can try taking a sip of water instead of clearing your throat
- Sucking on ice chips or hard candies
- Stay well hydrated
- Use a hard swallow
- Silent cough. Clear your throat with a puff of air like an "H" sound rather than a violent cough



Avoid excessive voice use and vocal demanding tasks when you have a vocal injury, laryngitis, or an upper respiratory infection.



DR. LACEY ATKINS

Dr. Atkins is a graduate of the Medical College of Georgia in Augusta. She then went on to complete her surgical residency in Otolaryngology-Head and Neck Surgery at Georgetown University Hospital and her fellowship training at Harvard's Massachusetts General Hospital in Laryngeal Surgery and Voice Rehabilitation. Because of her role as a musician, Dr. Atkins has always been fascinated by the mechanics involved with voice production. She went into medicine with the ultimate goal of specializing in voice/laryngeal surgery because of the integral role the larynx plays in how each performer interacts with their environment.