



MAXIMIZE YOUR VOICE:

THE IMPORTANCE OF VOCAL HYGIENE

Balance is essential for any mechanical system to function properly. In order for your voice to function optimally, there must be an appropriate balance between respiration, phonation, and resonance. Overall physical and mental health will impact vocal performance.

Overuse, misuse, or abuse to the laryngeal system can lead to tissue trauma resulting in a variety of vocal pathologies. Following injury, rest, rehabilitation and reintegration of healthy behaviors will maximize vocal function.

Follow the guidelines listed in this brochure to keep your voice in the best shape possible.

Consult with your voice pathologist regarding any other recommendations that pertain to your specific condition.

ADDITIONAL RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Erin N. Donahue, B.M., M.A., CCC-SLP
Voice Pathologist & Singing Voice Specialist
edonahue@soents.com

Stephen J. Gorman, Ph.D., CCC-SLP
Voice Pathologist
sgorman@soents.com

Jennifer A. Rising Keyges, M.A., CCC-SLP
Voice Pathologist
jkeyges@soents.com

Wendy D. LeBorgne, Ph.D., CCC-SLP
Voice Pathologist & Singing Voice Specialist
wleborgne@soents.com

Jennifer R. Reitz, M.S., CCC-SLP
Voice Pathologist
jreitz@soents.com

Nancy Dickinson, RHIT
Registered Health Information Technician
Administrative Assistant
ndickinson@soents.com

Beth Shoup
Patient Services Representative
bshoup@soents.com

THE BLAINE BLOCK INSITUTE FOR VOICE ANALYSIS AND REHABILITATION

1222 S. Patterson Blvd.
Dayton, OH 45402

Phone: 937-496-2622
Fax: 937-496-2614
www.bbivar.com

Erin N. Donahue, B.M., M.A., CCC-SLP
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VOCAL HEALTH



HYGIENE

RECOMMENDATIONS



HYDRATION

Adequate oral hydration is essential for a healthy voice and mucus management

- Drink at least 64 ounces of water each day
- Drink more water if you:
 - Consume more than two caffeinated beverages per day
 - Are exposed to dry or dusty environments
 - Exercise regularly
 - Use your voice a lot throughout the day
- Drink plenty of other clear liquids to supplement your water intake
- Steam inhalation from a personal steam inhaler may help to alleviate excessive dryness or thick phlegm in the throat
- Cool mist vaporizers or warm-air humidifiers provide additional moisture to a dry environment
- Avoid cough drops with menthol, as they may be drying to the throat. Instead use a piece of sugar-free hard candy or an herbal drop
- Over the counter (OTC) products are available to thin secretions and increase saliva production. Check with your doctor
- Medications (prescription, OTC, and holistic) may have drying effects on the laryngeal mucosa. Check with your pharmacist

VOCAL HYGIENE

PRACTICE GOOD VOCAL HEALTH

- Use non-verbal cues (like clapping or waving hands) to show enthusiasm
- Get a whistle for emergency situations
- Speak to others within a close range so you can be heard without yelling. Use a 3-foot distance to judge appropriate loudness (an arms length)
- Reduce ambient noise such as television, radio, fans, blowers, machinery, vacuum cleaners, etc.
- Face-to-face communication will improve comprehension
- Use amplification when speaking in a large room or to large groups
- Use a soft voice when appropriate (but never whisper)
- Use good posture to improve airflow and reduce tension/strain
- Get plenty of sleep
- Always warm-up your voice before public speaking or singing
- Cool-down your voice when finished
- Use an earpiece with all cell phones

ELIMINATE PHONOTRAUMATIC BEHAVIORS

- Avoid yelling, shouting, loud talking, and talking over noise
- Avoid singing or excessive talking in the car
- Do not use a cell phone in noisy environments
- Eliminate throat clearing and coughing. Use a hard swallow instead
- Stop using all tobacco products
- Stop all recreational drug use
- Avoid chemicals, dust, and other harmful inhalants
- Never whisper
- Don't push your voice to it's physiological limitations
- Don't overuse your voice
- Take "vocal naps" throughout the day. If your voice starts to feel tired, don't push it

