



Vocal and Hearing Health

For Vocalists and Musicians

***Without proper vocal hygiene and vocal techniques, vocal folds can be damaged and cause adverse effects on vocal quality.**

Good Vocal Hygiene

- Obtain adequate hydration (2 quarts per day)
- Avoid aggressive coughing
- Avoid excessive throat clearing
- Avoid antihistamines, analgesics, and anesthetics (these dry out the vocal folds)
- Avoid smoking
- Avoid caffeine and alcohol or drink more water to counter the effects
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- Manage Gastroesophageal Reflux Disease and Laryngopharyngeal Reflux Disease and other medical conditions

Good Vocal Habits

- Be sure to warm-up before you sing
- Move closer to or face your conversational partner
- Reduce speaking time in noisy environments
- Avoid hard glottal attacks
- Use pausing when speaking
- Speak with a “facial mask” focus instead of a “throat focus”
- Use proper breathing techniques when you sing and when you talk
- Relax your musculature system: jaw, lips, tongue, neck, and face when singing and talking
- Exercise
- Get plenty of rest before performances
- Use ear monitors to avoid vocal strain
- Use non-vocal sounds, such as clapping and whistling, to get attention

If you're voice becomes compromised:

- Seek help immediately. It takes approximately two hours of practice per day to restore your voice to health.
- Do not sing through the pain
- Consider Voice Therapy before Surgery. Speech Language Pathologist working with a vocal coach

***About Hearing Loss: If repeatedly exposed to intense music or noise, hearing loss can become permanent. Loss comes on gradually and may only become noticeable at 50 or 60 years of age. Other symptoms may also accompany hearing loss, such as Tinnitus and loss of pitch perception.**

Healthy Hearing

- Use appropriate earphones; ER-15 for most musicians, and ER-25 for percussion; Vented/tuned ear plugs (primarily attenuates high frequencies)
- Use ear monitors when listening to music
- Use baffles, mutes (when practicing), and shakers
- Rest ears between practice and performance
- Monitor additional sources of noise/music
- Have regular check-ups with an audiologist
- Hum. It causes the stapedius muscle to contract.
- It is safe to listen to an iPod for 120 minutes each day at 60% volume.
- Use carpets and drapes to absorb sound
- Don't smoke
- Stay fit/Exercise for increased blood flow
- Read Hearing Loss in Musicians (2009) by Chasin