

Vocal hygiene: Helping your voice stay healthy



What is vocal hygiene?

Using your voice too much or in the wrong way can hurt the voice. This is a list of behaviors that promote a healthy voice. This is called vocal hygiene. These may also prevent or take care of some voice problems.

Important note: This information is not a substitute for treatment. If therapy is needed, this information may be used before, during and after therapy.

Behaviors that may hurt the voice	Behaviors for a healthy voice
Shouting or yelling	Walk up to the person. Clap, whistle, ring a bell or blow a horn to attract attention.
Screaming, cheering	Use a noise maker, whistle or clap your hands.
Coughing, clearing throat	Swallow or drink water. Or sniff and swallow.
Not drinking enough water	Drink lots of water.
Excess mucus in throat	Drink more water. Or if needed, take medicine to decrease mucus.
Shallow breathing when talking	Use belly breathing.
Making animal and vehicle sounds with your throat or growling.	Use your lips and tongue to make silly sounds.
Talking fast	Talk slow and pause often.
Whispering	Use a quiet voice.
Talking loudly	Use a quiet or inside voice.
Talking nonstop or too much	Take time to rest your voice when you can.
Talking over loud music or noise	Turn the music or noise down or off. Or go to a quiet area to talk.
Talking fast	Talk slow and pause often.
Talking at a really high or low pitch	Talk at your normal pitch.
Talking in an angry or excited voice	Wait to calm down and then talk.
Talking to large groups of people without a microphone	Use a microphone for performances.

Singing beyond comfortable range	Get professional voice training. Never sing a note you can't sing quietly.
Eating spicy foods	Avoid or limit spicy foods.
Drinking caffeinated beverages	Avoid caffeine.
Clenching teeth or tensing jaw or tongue	Keep upper and lower teeth slightly apart. Let jaw move freely during speech.

Caregivers should stress the importance of a healthy voice and set a good example.

For other health and wellness information, check out this resource:

<https://kidshealth.org/ChildrensWi/en/parents>

ALERT: Call your child's doctor, nurse, or clinic if you have any concerns or if your child has special health care needs not covered by this information.

This sheet was created to help you care for your child or family member. It does not take the place of medical care. Talk with your healthcare provider for diagnosis, treatment and follow-up.