

## **How to keep your voice from becoming hoarse and tired?**

- Never raise your voice! Expressing anger by shouting, calling loudly a person in the other room, talking over a strong background noise, talking over other people, such as in a heated discussion, etc – all these will eventually damage your vocal cords and make you hoarse.
  - Unless you are professionally trained as a singer – do not sing! Singing strains the vocal cords, so if you want to heal your voice – refrain from singing for at least 3 – 4 weeks. If you intend to continue singing – take singing lesson from a professional teacher.
  - If you intend to talk for a lengthy period of time, make sure to have a bottle of water next to you and sip from it at intervals of 5 to 10 minutes. Refrain from drinking very hot or very cold drinks. If you can, take a candy. Sucking on a candy triggers the saliva glands in your mouth and the saliva lubricates the vocal cords.
  - After eating very spicy, sour or salty food, wash your vocal cords with water.
  - Be aware of your air supply when you speak. Breathe periodically every 6 to 7 words and do not wait until the end of a long sentence to breath. Never attempt speaking when you are out of breath.
  - Unless you are sick, try to avoid dry cough and throat clearing. If you have mucus in your throat – cough to clear it.
  - Alcohol and cigarette smoking is very damaging to the vocal cords. When you are hoarse or feel pain in your pharynx, limit your intake of alcoholic beverages. Cigarette smoking is out of the question if you want to maintain healthy vocal cords. Remember that excessive alcohol drinking and any cigarette smoking cause a permanent damage to the vocal cords.
  - Continuous stress is the worst enemy of your vocal cords (among others). When you are stressed, your muscles are tense and the vocal cords suffer. If you have sensitive vocal cords, try to change your lifestyle to alleviate stress. This can be done by insisting on a relaxing break during the day, such as having a quiet lunch, doing light physical exercise, taking Yoga lessons etc. Relaxed muscles are a key to healing your vocal cords and marinating their health.
  - If you feel pain in your vocal cords, or are very hoarse – see an ENT doctor. He will examine your vocal cords and issue a letter to the speech clinician. Don't forget to bring this letter to the therapy sessions.
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