

Voice care for teachers

Information and advice for patients

Speech and Language Therapy

As a teacher, it is important that you take care of your voice as you can't do your job without it. The following advice will help you look after your voice:

- Do**
- Warm your voice up before you start the day – don't ask your voice to run a marathon without exercising it first! Your Speech and Language Therapist will give you some warm-up exercises to do each day.
 - Speak quietly
 - Rest your voice (be silent)
 - Find time to be quiet and relax everyday, for example put your feet up and read the paper
 - Drink plenty of fluids such as water – at least 8 glasses each day
 - Use steam inhalations 2-3 times a day

- Don't**
- Speak for long periods
 - Shout – noisy teachers have noisy classrooms!
 - Smoke
 - Force your voice
 - Clear your throat frequently

Before using your voice

- Make sure you have a good posture. Check the following things:
 - Are you tense?
 - Are you standing/sitting up straight?
 - Are your shoulders hunched?
 - Are you clenching your jaw?
 - Are you gritting your teeth?
 - Is your chin sticking out?
- Check that you are not short of breath.
- Warm your voice up.

Voice care for teachers

Information and advice for patients

Speech and Language Therapy

Avoid the following things which can cause your voice to become aggravated:

- Extra strain and stress.
- Background noise such as:
 - noisy music in pubs
 - the television or radio
 - noisy traffic
- Shouting from room to room or from upstairs to downstairs.
- Dust, smoke, and fumes from:
 - traffic and petrol
 - hair spray and perfumes
 - air fresheners, polish and cleaning products
- A dry atmosphere;
 - If you have central heating use a humidifier to add moisture to the air or open windows.
- Excessive changes in temperature, such as going from a warm house to cold outside - use a scarf to filter the air.

Your voice can also be affected if you are tired, ill or anxious so be aware of these things before using it.

Contact details

If you have any questions or concerns please contact the Speech and Language Therapy Department on:

0121 507 4475

Monday – Friday, 8.30am - 4.30pm

Outside of these hours, or if no one is available to take your call, you can leave a message on the answerphone.

Voice care for teachers

Information and advice for patients

Speech and Language Therapy

Further information

For more information about our hospitals and services please see our websites www.swbh.nhs.uk and www.swbhengage.com or follow us on Twitter @SWBHnhs and Facebook www.facebook.com/SWBHnhs.

Sources used for the information in this leaflet

- Harris et al, 'Voice clinic handbook', 1998
- Green and Mathieson, 'The voice and its disorders', June 2001
- The Royal College of Speech and Language Therapists, Clinical guidelines, 2005

If you would like to suggest any amendments or improvements to this leaflet please contact the communications department on 0121 507 5420 or email: swb-tr.swbh-gm-patient-information@nhs.net



A Teaching Trust of The University of Birmingham
Incorporating City, Sandwell and Rowley Regis Hospitals
© Sandwell and West Birmingham Hospitals NHS Trust

ML3662
Issue Date: January 2013
Review Date: January 2015