



Greenville Ear, Nose & Throat

10 Tips to Save Your Voice

1. Avoid throat clearing, coughing and yelling. Instead of throat clearing, try to sniff with more effort. Sniffing helps clear your throat without making your vocal cords bang against each other. Another option is to clear your throat quietly.
2. Start softly when you speak. Begin with a soft, even breathy onset of your voice rather than a loud, strong attack when starting to talk.
3. Speak at a comfortable pitch level. Many times, people will speak at too low of a pitch when taking on an authoritative role or in teaching situations. Likewise, in tense or nervous situations, the pitch may be tight and high. Try to keep your pitch somewhere in the middle, where you feel the least strain and the most comfort.
4. Focus your voice in the middle of your mouth. If you “feel” your voice in your throat or nose, tension and strain probably are occurring. Concentrate on projecting your voice forward so that you “feel” the most energy in the middle of your mouth or just behind your upper front teeth. To get the sense of how this feels, try holding the sound of “MMM” and feel where the vibrations occur. They should be behind the top front teeth.
5. Use more frequent pauses for breathing. Rather than push your voice out, pause and get more breath to finish what you are saying. Pushing your voice out creates added stress and tension in the vocal cords, throat and mouth.
6. Talk only as needed. To allow your voice to rest, do not use your voice more often than necessary.
7. Use an open mouth and throat. Think of how open your mouth and throat feel when you yawn or sigh. Practice yawning or sighing frequently, and try to maintain the openness felt in the throat and mouth while talking.
8. Avoid talking over background noise. Background noise requires use of a louder voice and sometimes a different pitch of voice than normal. If you must talk with background noise, stay close to the listener (usually not more than an arm’s length away). In addition, maintaining good eye contact allows the listener to get cues from your lips and face during talking so that you may speak at softer levels.
9. Avoid smoking, smoky environments and excessive use of alcohol. Smoke irritates the throat and vocal cord tissue. Alcohol dries the tissue. These changes in vocal cord tissue will result in voice quality changes such as hoarseness. Chronic irritation may lead to other tissue changes that require medical or surgical treatment.
10. Drink liquids frequently and humidify the air. As much as possible, hydrate the tissue in the throat via the air that you breathe or drink liquids to moisten the tissue in your mouth and throat. The tissue of the vocal folds is gelatinous and dries out easily. If you experience frequent dryness, voice problems may arise. By contrast, recovery from many voice problems may be enhanced by increasing moisture to the vocal cords.

Please call our office if you have questions about these tips:

- Patewood (864) 454-4368
- Greer (864) 797-9400