



VOCAL EMERGENCIES

Ryan Bede, M.M.

Voice Faculty - Seattle Pacific University & Tacoma Community College

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4:00pm

INTRODUCTION - VOCAL HYGEINE

▶ HYDRATION & REST ARE BEST!!

- ▶ Vocal folds require hydration for normal function
- ▶ 8-12 large glasses of water per day (depending on activity)
- ▶ Try to avoid dehydrating beverages with caffeine/alcohol
- ▶ Voice is naturally resilient, but requires adequate rest for recovery
- ▶ Maintain regular sleep patterns, and avoid strenuous voice use when the body is fatigued

FATIGUED BODY = FATIGUED VOICE

YOUR BODY IS YOUR INSTRUMENT!!

- ▶ For more vocal “DOs and DON’Ts”, see provided handout

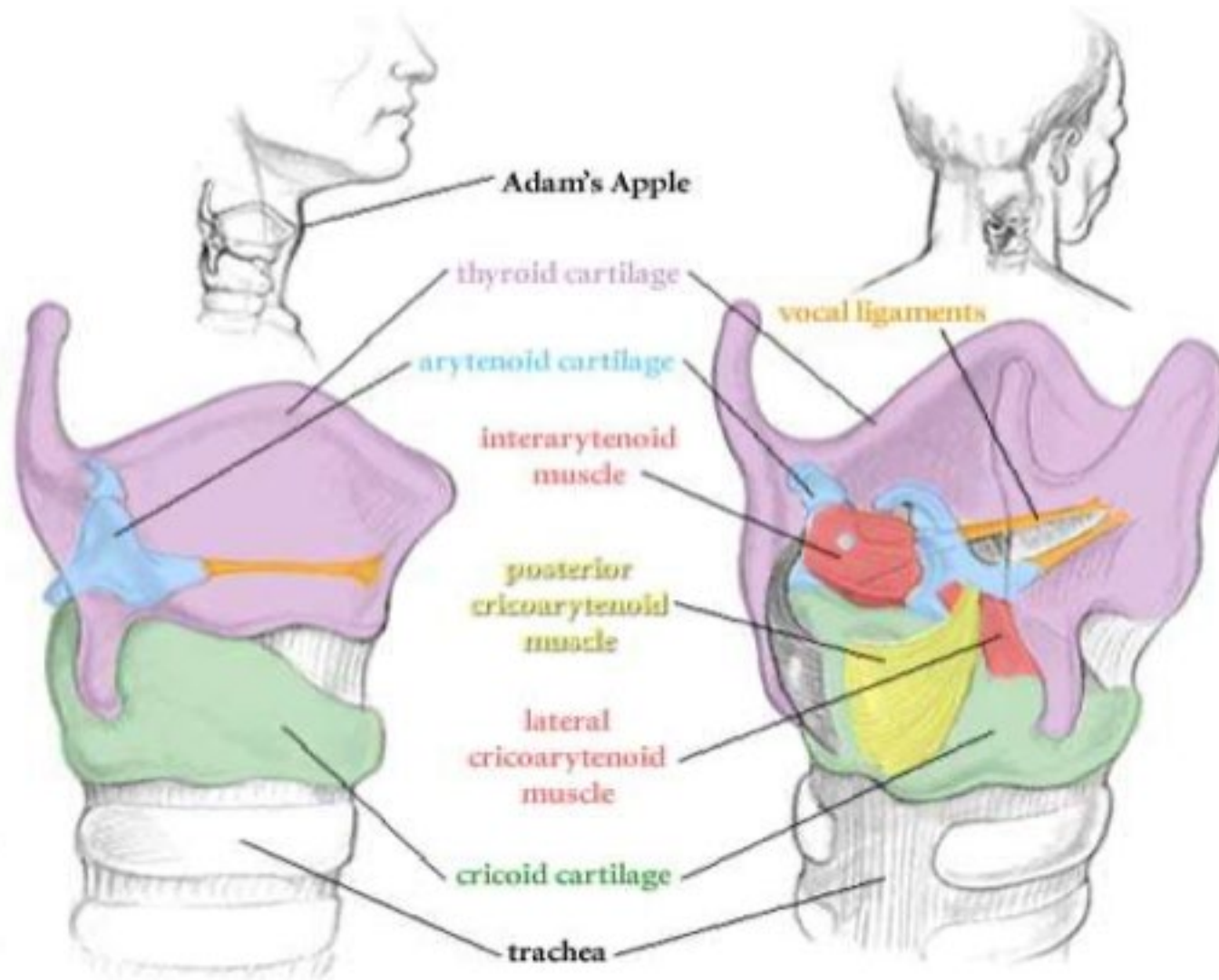
THE HEALTHY SPEAKING AND SINGING VOICE

- ▶ Good speaking habits are important for maintaining vocal health
 - ▶ You are a vocal professional!
 - ▶ Poor speaking habits negatively affect the singing voice
 - ▶ Decreased breath energy/support
 - ▶ Excessive vocal fry
 - ▶ Unnecessary tension in the neck and tongue

All can make the folds susceptible to nodules and cause muscles to fatigue quickly

HELPFUL HINTS:

- 1) Speak with modulated inflection (not monotone)
- 2) Find your optimum speaking range (may be higher or lower than you currently speak)
- 3) Try not to speak for long periods of time in noisy environments



HOARSE? TAKE CAUTION, OF COURSE!!

- ▶ Hoarseness = nature's signal to rest the voice (Bunch, 155)
- ▶ may observe breathiness - raspiness - "rough" quality to the voice
- ▶ caused by some change in the VF edges which allow excess air to escape
 - ▶ as simple as a cold/allergy, or more seriously a disorder in the larynx or even pressure on the motor nerves to the larynx

Hoarseness that lasts more than ten days requires prompt investigation

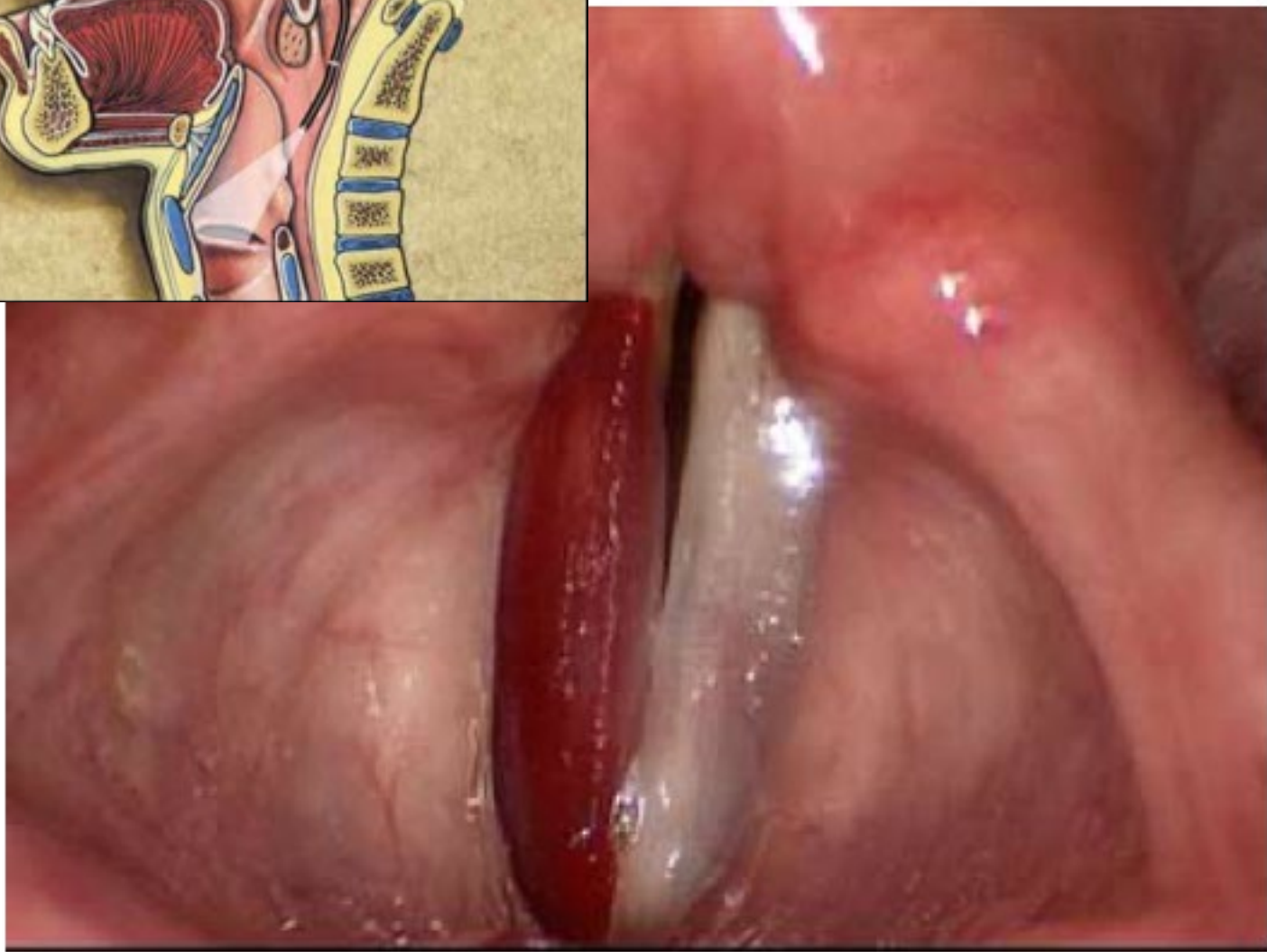
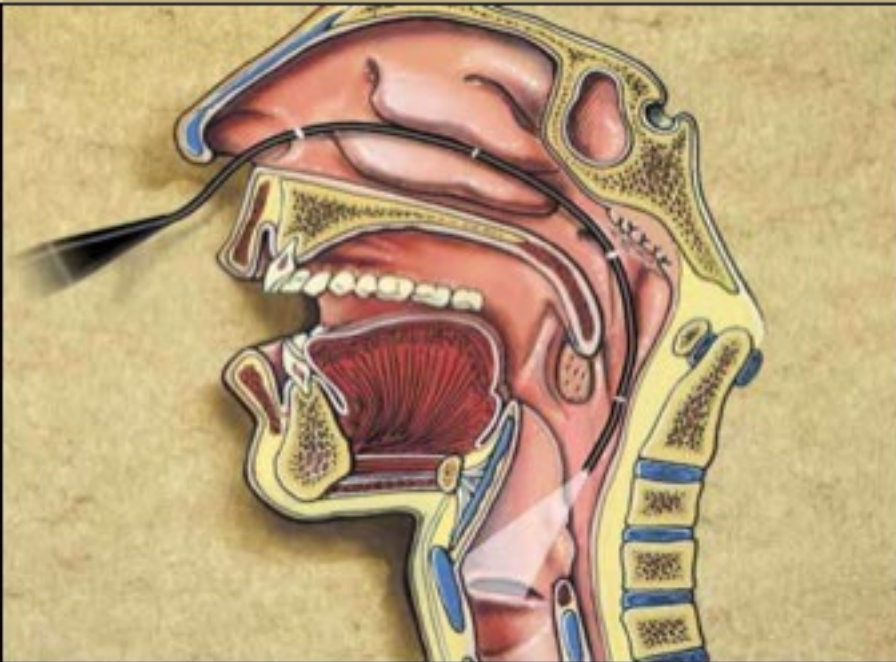
ALLERGIES - cause swelling in the throat and larynx leading to hoarseness

pollen - dust- toxic substances - cigarette smoke

RESPIRATORY DISEASE - irritation to membranes of vocal tract

cold - sinus infection - bronchitis - pneumonia





HINTS FOR WHEN YOU ARE ILL

- ▶ get plenty of rest
- ▶ speak as little as possible; if you must sing, it is even more important to save your voice
- ▶ drink plenty of fluids (alcohol induces excess swelling)
- ▶ dryness increases discomfort; keep the throat moist
- ▶ avoid loud throat clearing and violent coughing if possible (steam is best to clear the lungs)
- ▶ BE CONSIDERATE TO OTHER SINGERS!

▶ THROAT REMEDIES

- ▶ Slippery elm lozenges
Throat Coat tea
Neilmed Sinus Rinse/Neti-Pot
Steaming (using a personal steamer, hot shower, steam room at gym, etc.)
Glycerin lozenges
Zinc lozenges

▶ DECONGESTANTS

- ▶ cause constriction of blood vessels and membranes in nose and throat to shrink (and are often very drying; use with caution when singing)

▶ VITAMINS

- ▶ A - mucous membrane health
- ▶ B - stress
- ▶ C - healing/future immunity

BUT....I NEED TO SING *TODAY!!*

- ▶ HYDRATE, HYDRATE, HYDRATE!!
- ▶ Warm liquids (herbal tea, honey, lemon, ginger)
- ▶ take extra time to rest if possible (vocal “naps”)
- ▶ slow, focused warm-up
 - ▶ SOVTE’s
 - ▶ [m] [n] [ng]
 - ▶ Lip trill
 - ▶ Tongue trill
 - ▶ “raspberry” (labio-lingual)
 - ▶ water bubbling
 - ▶ Straw phonation
- ▶ “marking” in rehearsal
- ▶ performance considerations
- ▶ cool-down routine
- ▶ Be cautious of medications/remedies
- ▶ extreme circumstances (only under physician guidance)

CONCLUSION/THANK YOU

► SELECTED SOURCES

Bunch Dayme, Meribeth. *Dynamics of the Singing Voice* (5th Edition). Vienna, Austria: Springer-Verlag, 2009

Dimon, Theodore. *Anatomy of the Voice: An Illustrated Guide for Singers, Vocal Coaches, and Speech Therapists*. Berkley, CA: North Atlantic, 2018

McCoy, Scott. *Your Voice: An Inside View 3, Voice Science & Pedagogy*. Gahanna, OH: Inside View Press, 2019

Ragan, Kari. *A Systematic Approach to Voice: The Art of Studio Application*. San Diego, CA: Plural, 2020

For more information about performance and teaching activities, please visit my website at www.ryanbede.com



EMERALD

CHORAL ACADEMY

Vocal Emergencies
Monday, April 12, 2021

Ryan Bede, Baritone
Voice Faculty - Seattle Pacific University & Tacoma Community College

PROPER VOCAL HYGIENE

DO

- Stay hydrated - strive to drink two liters (approximately 8 glasses) of water per day
- Get enough sleep - 7-9 hours per night is a great goal
- Eat regular meals and maintain a balanced diet
- Treat acid reflux/indigestion
- Practice good vocal habits, both speaking and singing
- Minimize speaking in loud environments
- Attempt to reduce stress, throat clearing, and non-productive coughing
- Maintain a routine of vocal warm-up and cool-down exercises, and practice regularly to stay in shape (just like any other physical activity)
- Work with a voice instructor to build strength, stamina, and efficiency in your singing
- Establish a relationship with a laryngologist, and get a baseline examination of your vocal folds *when you're healthy* (in case of any issues that arise)

DON'T

- Sing if discomfort results from either singing or speaking (STOP and consider seeking medical care)
- Take in substances that irritate and/or dehydrate the vocal folds, such as cigarette smoke, alcoholic drinks, excessive caffeine, and medications that dry out mucous membranes (antihistamines, decongestants)
- Eat late at night (may cause indigestion which can irritate the voice)
- Use medicated throat lozenges directly before or while singing (these numb sensation and may risk more vocal strain and potential damage)

- Use aspirin or ibuprofen (can increase the likelihood of vocal fold hemorrhage; acetaminophen is best for pain relief)
- Whisper when your throat is sore (this is much harder on your voice than talking softly, or even better - just REST!)

STRATEGIES FOR SOLVING SIMPLE VOCAL “EMERGENCIES”

- drink warm liquids (herbal tea, lemon, honey, ginger)
- antacids for simple acid reflux
- inhale warm steam/humidified air in home, car, office
- gentle, dedicated vocal warm-up

VOCAL “MARKING”

Similarly to marking in dance, “marking” in the vocal music world refers to when a singer reduces their vocal load to preserve their voice. What does that mean practically speaking? It means that in a rehearsal, a singer may sing in a sort of half-voice, or exceptionally lightly. They may also sing an octave down, especially if the music sits high in the voice as it often does for sopranos and tenors. In essence then, marking is a tool for vocal health.

<https://operaversity.com/performance/what-marking-in-singing-how-to-do-it>

SEMI-OCCLUDED VOCAL TRACT EXERCISES (SOVTE’s)

- Lip trill
- Tongue trill
- “Raspberry” (labio-lingual)
- Hum postures: m, n, ng
- Straw phonation
- Water bubbling

SEATTLE-AREA VOICE CARE RECOMMENDATIONS

Dr. Albert Merati - University Of Washington Dept. of Otolaryngology/Head and Neck Surgery <https://otolaryngology.uw.edu/faculty/albert-merati>

Dr. Craig Villari - Bellevue ENT
<https://bellevueent.com/about-us/physicians/dr-craig-villari/>

University Of Washington Performing Voice Clinic - Dr. Neel Bhatt, MD/Juli Rosenzweig, MS, CCC-SLP <https://otolaryngology.uw.edu/faculty/neel-k-bhatt-md-performvoiceclinic@uw.edu>

Virginia Mason Clinic for Performing Artists - Dr. Jamie Chang, MD/Allison Hirst, MS, CCC-SLP (206) 223-6374 <https://www.virginiamason.org/performing-artists-clinic>