



The Proper Care and Feeding of Your Voice

Primary Principles

- You want your vocal chords to be wet and warm
- When speaking, avoid products that can increase the mucus level
- Protect your vocal chords

Wet and Warm

- Drink water – room temperature or warm. Cold is bad, especially just before you speak. It will contract your vocal chords
- Lemon dries out the vocal chords. Use it only if you have a high level of mucus
- Alcohol and caffeine dry out your vocal chords. Avoid them, especially on the day before and the day of your speech
- Chocolate, many soft drinks, and many “energy” drinks also contain caffeine. Avoid them, as well
- Keep hydrated. There is a saying – “pee pale.” If your urine is yellow, especially deep yellow, you are dehydrated
- Avoid decongestants. Their function is to dry you out. And this includes your vocal chords
- If you are in a dry climate, use a humidifier
- Avoid overly salty foods. They draw water out of the body

Protect

- Nuts and other crunchy foods can leave residual crumbs, which can get between the vocal folds and irritate them. Avoid them, especially before you speak
- Avoid smoking products. The smoke irritates your vocal chords
- Avoid places with dusty or foul air
- Do not shout or scream at sporting events, concerts, or similar environments
- If you are in a loud environment, such as a large networking event, and you must talk with someone, find a quiet area, possibly out in the hall, to do so
- Do not force your voice
- Use a microphone, if necessary
- If you have a cold or laryngitis, rest your voice. Don’t try to force a conversation
- Don’t whisper loudly
- Speak at a natural pitch
- Do not clear your throat continually

Avoid Mucus-Causing Foods and Situations

- Avoid dairy products before you speak or perform. They can increase the mucus level
- Acid fruit drinks (including orange juice) can also increase the mucus level. Avoid them
- Avoid spicy foods that can cause acid reflux
- Do not eat before you speak



The Proper Care and Feeding of Your Voice

Fighting Problems

- I have found that taking an ounce of concentrated aloe vera juice per day increases my ability to fight off a cold. I use a 5x concentration
- If I find that I am losing my voice, drinking concentrated aloe vera juice can help bring my voice back, at least to the point where I am functional. A hot, steamy shower also helps.

12/1/15