

How to Care for Your Voice

- Do avoid irritants such as smoke, dust, strong smells, sprays and excessive alcohol.
- Do avoid eating late at night and especially strongly-spiced foods. This is to avoid acid reflux irritating your throat.
- Do drink plenty of water.
- Do use steam inhalations rather than decongestants to help mucus after or during a cold.
- Do beware of self-medication. Discuss remedies with your pharmacist or doctor .
- Do try and limit your intake of caffeine and alcohol as they are dehydrating.
- Do avoid violent or habitual coughing to clear your throat. Steam, swallow or have a sip of water rather than making the problem worse by throat-clearing.
- Do watch your posture when talking, especially on the phone or talking into a Dictaphone.
- Do try to speak naturally if you are using a voice-activated computer.
- Do try and avoid calling to people in another room; it is better to walk over to them than to shout.
- Do try to breath with your mouth closed when you are not speaking, especially when you are outside. This means that you will be warming and filtering air which is healthier for your lungs.
- Do try and manage your emotions by learning to talk about them rather than bottling them up so you feel 'choked up'. Emotional problems can cause tension in your breathing and vocal apparatus.
- Do avoid whispering if you are wanting to rest your voice. The tension caused by whispering can do more harm than good.
- Don't sing or shout with a sore throat.
- Do see you doctor if a sore throat persists, particularly if it is not associated with a cough or cold.

Advice from the Royal College of Speech & Language Therapists