

Vocal Tips for Performers

Dos:

- Routinely drink water (over 2 litres per day if performing)
- Do use steam inhalation but not with any additives.
- If mucous is thick/ropey, consider mangoes or pineapples for breaking down the mucous.
- Monitor fluid levels in general (if urine is pale then balance is adequate).
- Always warm-up before singing and consider warming down after a performance.
- Practice singing in frequent short bursts rather than one long session until you have developed vocal stamina and are vocally fit.
- Consider vocal fitness in the same sense as general fitness---prepare, rest, healthy lifestyle, etc.
- Nothing is as good for the tired voice as **complete** voice rest! So put your feet up, relax and turn your voice off!!!

Don'ts:

- Avoid menthol-based lozenges as they will dry your throat
- Avoid aspirin within one week of singing due to the increased possibility of capillary haemorrhage. Take paracetamol instead if necessary.
- Avoid throat clearing. Try to do a dry swallow instead.
- Avoid throat gargles which anaesthetise the throat as they may dry/mask the effect of an infection or strain.
- Avoid caffeine-based substances such as coffee, tea and coke (drying effects).
- Avoid recreational drugs. Both marijuana and cigarettes can be irritating, burning and drying to throat causing swelling of the vocal folds.
- Try not to eat late at night particularly spicy foods as this promotes reflux during sleep which can irritate vocal folds.
- If voice has not recovered the morning after a performance, rest your voice completely for that day to speed recovery.

- Never push the voice past its limits.
- If experiencing throat discomfort symptoms, recognise these as indications of vocal fatigue and stop singing. If they persist see a Speech Pathologist.
- Avoid whispering (this is worse than using a low volume).