April 16 Is World Voice Day!

 Did you know?

An estimated 17.9 million adults in the U.S. report problems with their voice. Many people use their voices for their work. Singers, teachers, telemarketers, lawyers, broadcast journalists, sales people, and public speakers are those at greatest risk, for voice injury.

Taking care of your voice can help you avoid voice problems and disorders.

The National Institute on Deafness and Other Communication Disorders (NIDCD) supports research on understanding causes and conditions that can harm the voice and to test new ways to diagnose or treat voice disorders.

NIDCD-funded research is exploring how the brain controls the nerves and muscles to produce the human voice. These findings may help the development of better treatments for voice disorders.

Researchers are investigating how reflux from the stomach or esophagus to the throat harms the vocal folds.

NIDCD-funded researchers are also looking at new ways to assess vocal disorders and testing new methods of voice therapy.

What causes voice problems?
- Upper respiratory infections
- Acid reflux, heartburn, gastroesophageal reflux disease (GERD), or laryngopharyngeal reflux (LPR)
- Vocal misuse and overuse
- Growths on the vocal folds
- Cancer of the larynx
- Neurological diseases
- Psychological trauma or stress

You may have a voice problem if you answer “yes” to any of these questions:
- Has your voice become hoarse or raspy?
- Have you lost your ability to hit some high notes when singing?
- Does your voice suddenly sound deeper?
- Does your throat often feel raw, achy, or strained?
- Has it become an effort to talk?
- Do you find yourself repeatedly clearing your throat?

If you answered “yes” to any of these questions, you may want to talk to your physician.

Tips To Prevent Voice Problems

Maintain a healthy body weight and diet. Exercise regularly and get enough rest.

Use a saline solution if you choose to gargle.

Limit your intake of alcohol or caffeine and medications that dry out the vocal folds.

Don’t drink and wood assume heavy-metal.

Avoid mouthwash containing alcohol or irritating chemicals.

Use your voice wisely and try not to speak or sing when your voice is tired.

Rest your voice when you need it. Avoid straining or whispering.

Practice good breathing techniques when singing or talking.

Avoid cradling the phone to prevent muscle tension in your neck.

Use a microphone, when necessary, in exhibit areas, classrooms, or exercise rooms.

Avoid talking in noisy places.

Talk to your physician about ways to prevent heartburn, GERD, or LPR.

Consider voice therapy with a speech-language pathologist to treat voice problems.

Sources:

Taking Care of Your Voice: https://www.nidcd.nih.gov/health/taking-care-your-voice


https://twitter.com/nidcd