Vocal Health Awareness Guide

Whether you use your voice for work or play...
Empower yourself with the knowledge to care for your unique instrument

An accessible introduction to vocal health

This free guide will help you:

- ✔️ Bring mindful attention to your voice
- ✔️ Create space for regular reflections and check ins
- ✔️ Recognise daily habits which support or undermine your vocal health
- ✔️ Enrich your self-care routine with easy, sustainable adaptations
- ✔️ Explore your individual vocal needs with compassion and curiosity
- ✔️ Empower you to learn more about how to care for your voice

Wherever you are on your Vocal Journey...

Your voice is welcome here.

@truevoicecreations

visit the website

*This free resource has been created by **True Voice Creations**, a Creative Education business which promotes Holistic Voicework to support Confidence, Wellbeing and Creativity. This is a basic guide with references to widely recognised vocal health considerations and does not aim to outline all aspects of vocal health, provide any clinical recommendations, make specific health claims, nor endorse any health products or medicines.*

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Hydration

Hydration is essential for healthy vocal function, keeping the vocal folds supple and reducing the risk of strain, discomfort, and fatigue. Dehydration affects the whole body, including cognitive performance, physical stamina, and vocal efficiency. Regular hydration is key to vocal health.

Considerations:

- Systemic Hydration (food, liquids)
- Topical Hydration (steaming, nebulizers)
- Loss of Hydration (exercise/environmental)

Reflective Question: Have I sufficiently hydrated today?

Nutrition

Balanced nutrition fuels your whole body, including your voice. Good nourishment supports the energy, muscle function, and recovery needed for vocal performance. While individual needs vary, healthful eating habits help maintain stamina, focus, and overall wellbeing.

Considerations:

- Allergies/Food Sensitivities
- High Fat/Sugar/Salt Foods
- Fizzy/Acidic Drinks

Reflective Question: Have I supported myself nutritionally today?

Hormones

Hormonal changes can directly affect vocal quality. Shifts in hormone levels can influence vocal stability, range, and endurance. Being aware of these natural changes helps inform a tailored approach to our individual vocal care.

Considerations:

- Foods/Medications
- Ovulation/Menstruation/Pregnancy/Perimenopause/Menopause

Reflective Question: Might there be factors to consider about my hormonal landscape today?

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Respiratory

Respiratory health plays a fundamental role in powering vocal sound, supporting strength, stability, and stamina. Ongoing maintenance of respiratory wellbeing is a key component of voice care.

Considerations:

- Allergies
- Upper Respiratory Tract Infection
- Existing Conditions: e.g Asthma/COPD/Bronchiectasis

Reflective Question: How is my quality of breath today and is it supporting what I need to do?

Lifestyle

Your daily habits and routines directly impact vocal health, influencing energy levels and affecting vocal performance and recovery time. A balanced lifestyle helps maintain vocal stamina and prevent injury.

Considerations:

- Work: Demand and Intensity/Stress Levels/Health and Safety Factors
- Home: Support/Stability/Living Conditions
- Recreation: Drugs/Alcohol/Smoking/Risk-taking Behaviours
- Rest: Sleep Quality/Relaxation Routines/Integration Time

Reflective Question: Am I feeling well rested today? Have I consumed/done anything that could be affecting me today?

Environment

Our surroundings impact how we use our voice, and certain factors can put us at increased risk of vocal strain and fatigue. Awareness of environmental factors supports healthier decision making regarding our vocal habits.

Considerations:

- Personal Safety
- Nervous System Response
- Temperature/Humidity
- Acoustics/Noise Levels

Reflective Question: Is my current environment supporting me? Is this environment making it difficult for me to maintain healthy vocal habits?

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Medication

Some medications cause side effects like dryness, muscle tension, or fatigue, which can affect vocal comfort and function. If you notice any changes in your voice while taking medication and are concerned consult your pharmacist or GP.

Considerations:

- Herbal/Dietary Supplements
- Over The Counter Medications
- Prescription Medications

Reflective Question: Am I aware of any noticeable changes in my body as a result of a current medication?

Physical

The voice relies on the whole body to function well. Posture, movement, and muscle tension all influence vocal flexibility and comfort. Developing self-awareness and engaging with physical care and maintenance supports efficient voice use and helps prevent strain.

Considerations:

- Exercise: Active/Sedentary
- Accessibility: Adaptations/Adjustments
- Injuries
- Tension

Reflective Question: Is there anything limiting my flexibility/mobility today? Are there any physical challenges which are impacting my body or affecting my voice?

Voice Use

Voice use requires energy and endurance. The frequency, duration, and intensity of use affect vocal health. Sustainable habits protect against fatigue and injury, especially when under regular or heavy demand.

Considerations:

- Speaking Duration
- Performance Stamina
- Warm-ups/Preparation Routine
- Vocal Strain/Injuries
- Cool Down Routine

Reflective Question: How have I been using my voice today? Awareness of vocal habits?

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Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing

How we think and feel influences our behaviour, shaping our voice use and approach to self-care. Supporting yourself in this area is an important foundation for vocal health.

Considerations:

- Mood
- Thoughts
- Feelings
- Attitudes
- Beliefs

Reflective Question: Checking in with myself today, do I feel resourced and able to meet my needs? If not do I have access to support?

Energy Levels

Our energy levels influence how we show up vocally, affecting our creative and expressive capacity. Enhancing our self-awareness in this area can prevent risk of vocal fatigue and injury.

Considerations:

Using the **5 Elements of Voicework®** framework can help us ask the question of: 'How are my energy levels?' providing a more comprehensive way to acknowledge our different parts whilst building awareness that our personal energy is impacted by different factors

- How is my Physiological energy?
- How is my Psychological energy?
- How is my Social energy?
- How is my Emotional energy?
- How is my Spiritual energy?



Reflective Question: How would I describe my overall energy when considering all 5 Elements? How do you relate to these prompts; what do they mean for you?

To learn more about the 5 Elements of Voicework® approach and how this learning methodology can support your personal vocal journey, please visit:

Signposting and Further Support

If you have any concerns about changes in your voice approach your GP for further support.

- Vocal Health is a multidisciplinary field and there are many specialists who work within specific branches. "Voice Care" and "Vocal Health" are good starting points if you wish to do your own research or identify Practitioners in your local area.
- To access helpful information on Vocal Health for performers consult BAPAM's (British Association for Performing Arts Medicine) website for learning resources bapam.org.uk/fit-to-sing-bapam-vocal-health-factsheet-updated/
- See Stage Fit, an online health training platform for professionals, students, workplaces and education providers in the performing arts: stagefit.org.uk/
- To explore educational training resources in Vocal Health consult the Vocal Health Education website: vocalhealth.co.uk/
- Music Support offers assistance to those involved in the UK music industry experiencing substance use, addiction and/or mental health challenges: musicsupport.org/
- Tonic Music provides music industry-specific mental health support: tonicmusic.co.uk/tonic-rider
- Music Minds Matter is a mental health support avenue for all those working In music coordinated by Help Musicians: helpmusicians.org.uk/get-support/mental-health
- We Are Here Scotland are a support organisation specifically for Black, Minority Ethnic, Asylum Seeker, Refugee and Migrant women and girls have collated a list of mental health and wellbeing organisations you can access HERE
- Samaritans Scotland have produced a comprehensive list of additional support organisations categorised by topic which you can access HERE

Drinkline: 0300 123 1110
Samaritans: samaritans.org 116123
Mind: mind.org.uk 03001233393
Papyrus Hopeline247: papyrus-uk.org/papyrus-HOPELINE247 08000684141
Shout: giveusashout.org text MUSIC to: 85258
Scottish Association for Mental Health: samh.org.uk
Mental Health Crisis Team (Greater Glasgow): nhsggc.scot/your-health/heads-up-mental-health-support/ 01412111430
LGBTQ+ Health: lgbthealth.org.uk/
Amina (Muslim Women's Resource Centre): mwrc.org.uk/
Glasgow Women's Aid: glasgowwomensaid.org.uk/ 01415532022
Say Women: say-women.co.uk 01415525203
Speak Out Scotland: speakoutscotland.org
Rape Crisis Scotland: rapecrisisscotland.org.uk/

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