



## **Introduction**

Do you have:

- A dry throat
- Frequent sore throats
- Vocal fatigue or strain
- A rough voice
- Hoarseness
- The sensation of a lump in your throat
- A frequent need to clear your throat
- Constant/occasional voice loss
- Difficulty in projecting your voice
- A deterioration in your singing voice

The symptoms above are some of the early "tell-tale" signs of inefficient voice use. So if you have one or more of the above symptoms frequently for a period of 1 month or more, you are advised to seek consultation with an ENT specialist and a Speech Therapist for investigation.

## **Frequently Asked Questions**

### ***Why is throat clearing bad for the vocal folds?***

During throat clearing, the vocal folds move toward each other in a series of strong and hard contact movements. This will increase the chances of abrasion of the vocal fold edges, which over a long period of time can lead to vocal abuse and a change in voice quality.

### ***Why is coffee bad for your throat?***

Coffee and caffeinated drinks have a dehydrating effect on the mucosal lining of the laryngeal area which is not optimal for good vocal function. In some people, it can result in thickened secretions as in when one takes sweetened drinks, which in turn can lead to throat clearing. Water is the best, about 2 litres a day.

### ***Why is it important to find the right pitch?***

Speaking at an inappropriate pitch causes unnecessary strain on the laryngeal muscles, and friction on the vocal folds.

***Is whispering good for you?***

While whispering may have a soft and gentle quality, it is in fact a strained manner of using your vocal folds and is therefore inefficient voice use. Prolonged whispering can lead to vocal pathology.

***Does hot and spicy food affect my voice?***

There is no direct correlation between spicy foods and voice problems. However, individuals who have observed sensitivity to certain foods should exercise discretion in the consumption of such foods.

Source: Singapore General Hospital