

Taking Care of Your Voice

1. Sip water often throughout the day
2. Don't yell or call out from the next room. Use other ways to get attention, or go to the person
3. Face your listener, and move closer so you don't have to raise your voice
4. Reduce background noise (mute the TV, turn down the music, go to a quiet room or street, or wait until the noisy bus goes by)
5. Avoid speaking while you're exercising
6. Use a headset with a microphone for virtual conversations
7. Speak slowly. Pause for breath **BEFORE** you find yourself running out of air and *squeezing* the words out
8. Use a relaxed, natural voice. If you are under stress, take some slow breaths, wait until you can speak quietly and calmly
9. Avoid clenching your jaw - consciously relax, and keep space between your teeth
10. Allow for periods of voice rest during the day, especially after using your voice for a while
11. **Try not to clear your throat or cough unnecessarily.** If you feel as if you need to cough or clear your throat, first try one of these **prevention strategies**:
 - a. Swallow
 - b. Take a sip of water
 - c. Try to breathe slowly and through your nose
 - d. Use a cough candy
 - e. Distract yourself in some way
 - f. Try a "**silent cough**": breathe in through your nose, then blow air out forcefully through pursed lips. Swallow right away, or take a sip of water.