**VOICE REST**

**Voice rest is very important after certain vocal fold injuries and surgeries.** Your vocal folds will not heal properly if they are overused during this time. Just as you would not consider running a day after knee surgery, you should try not to talk or make any noise when your doctor places you on voice rest.

Below are some general guidelines for voice rest. These will be tailored to meet your specific needs by your doctor, speech pathologist, and/or singing voice specialist.

**Post-op Voice Surgery: Typically 1-2 weeks VOICE REST**
- This means absolutely NO talking, throat clearing, whispering, or coughing (if you can avoid it) for ____ days.
- Any noise that you make can be damaging and make it difficult for the vocal folds to heal properly.
- Exercise such as weightlifting, straining in the bathroom, and any other activity that produces forceful vocal fold closure may result in injury and effect the post operative result.
- Playing some musical instruments (i.e. wind instruments) may result in forceful vocal fold contact. If you are an active instrumentalist, please discuss this issue with the team prior to vocal fold surgery.

**1st post op visit with speech pathology and/or doctor:**
- Examination of vocal fold to see how they are healing.
- Speech Pathologist will begin to take you off voice rest if appropriate.
- You will be allowed to use your voice, but you must not overdo it.

**Guidelines for gradual return to voice use:**
These times are the maximum amounts of cumulative voice use in each day.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Day of Post op visit</th>
<th>AM</th>
<th>PM</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2nd day:</td>
<td>10 minutes</td>
<td>10 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3rd day:</td>
<td>20 minutes</td>
<td>20 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4th day:</td>
<td>45 minutes</td>
<td>45 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5th day:</td>
<td>1 hour</td>
<td>1 hour</td>
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<tr>
<td>6th day:</td>
<td>2 hours total spread over the day</td>
<td>2 hours total spread over the day</td>
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<tr>
<td>7th day:</td>
<td>3 hours total spread over the day</td>
<td>3 hours total spread over the day</td>
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<tr>
<td>8th day onward:</td>
<td>add ½ hour a day to the total talking time</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

- This is a progression. If you have any trouble, back up and do not progress until you are ready. Everyone heals at different rates.
- Remember, you should never keep talking if your voice wears out or gets
tired, or if there is any discomfort with talking. This is your body talking to you! You should rest your voice if this happens.

- Singers…

THINGS TO REMEMBER:

- Use an easy, natural voice
- No phone use until 3 weeks after surgery
- Always Avoid Extremes –
  - Yelling, singing, throat clearing, **talking for a long period of time without a break**, heavy lifting and strenuous exercise
- If any pain, fatigue, hoarseness – call your physician or speech pathologist
- Drink lots of water, **no caffeine/alcohol**
- Take vocal breaks – for 20 minutes of use, take a 10 minute break
- Voice therapy with a speech pathologist and/or singing voice specialist may be indicated to help you attain the best voice possible following your surgery and to help stop any negative voice techniques that led to your original voice condition.
- You may be prescribed an acid-blocking medication after your surgery. It is **very important** to take these medications after your surgery as prescribed. They will help your vocal folds to heal by eliminating any irritating acid exposure from your stomach that often occurs.

*Further specific instructions/exercises may be provided by your speech pathologist and/or singing voice specialist*