

# Guide to Voice Care

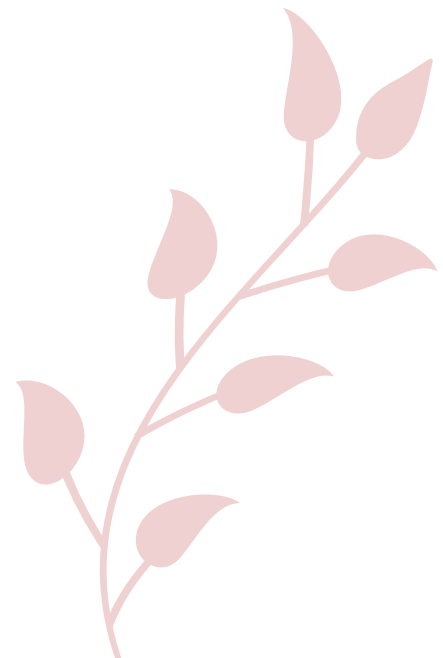
Hello Singers,

Singing is a physical activity and there's more to just resting and drinking water that will help keep your voice in shape. If you ever feel like your throat is hurting, sound scratchy, lost sound, or experience fatigue, here are some things that you can do to prevent that.



## VOCAL CARE

- ✓ Water
- ✓ Humidifier or Steam
- ✓ Massage Neck and Shoulders
- ✓ Breathwork and Mindset
- ✓ SOVT Exercises
- ✓ Sleep and Rest



# WHEN IS YOUR VOICE UNHEALTHY?

- When your voice becomes hoarse and scratchy
- Unable to sing higher notes when you could before
- Throat feels strained and achy
- Sound is not coming out when you talk or sing
- Needing to clear the throat too often

## WAYS TO VOCAL CARE

1. **Water:** Drinking plenty of water throughout the day will hydrate your muscles especially if you live in drier areas or if you have been using your voice all day. When you are using your voice, the mucus lining around your vocal cords will get dry because a lot of air has been passing through to make sound. In order for your muscles to stay moisturized, you need to drink water. Make a reminder so that you can visually see how much more water you need for the rest of the day. Put it on your calendar to remind yourself. Sometimes we are so busy that we just simply forget!

2. **Humidifier or Steam:** Making sure your environment has enough humidity is important to keep your throat from getting dry. When it gets too dry, that's when the rubbing of the vocal folds will cause damage. Another way to keep your vocal muscles hydrated is by steaming warm air directly to your mouth. The droplets will seep into the muscles faster. You can purchase a steam inhaler online if you want and it comes with purified water that you put into the inhaler. Or you can heat up some water, put it in a bowl, tilt your head over the bowl, and cover your head with a towel keeping in the steam/vapors.

3. **Massage Neck and Shoulders:** If you are feeling strain in your throat, chances are you are extremely tense in the neck and shoulder area. This ties into your stress level and workload from life responsibilities. Take the time to massage your muscles. It eases pain. It reduces anxiety. It boosts immunity. It increases blood flow circulation, which we know is good for muscle function. Book an appointment with a massage therapist or purchase one of those machines that you can do on your own at your convenience.

4. **Breathwork and Mindset:** Try out some breathing exercises to calm the mind and body. This will help you to develop better breath support when you use your voice. When you are in the right mind space, you will be more open and free when practicing or performing. We tend to exert our bodies when we get frustrated or get nervous. If we can get our mind to think clearly, it will enhance our performance without the need to "push." That is why breathing exercises help. It reduces anxiety, nerves, and negative thoughts. Pushing too much air out when you go to sing, will dry out your vocal cords. It will actually make you more tired due to the exertion you are putting on your body. By repeating breathing exercises daily, you can sing for a longer period of time and produce a cleaner sound when you sing.

Examples:

Inhale for 4 counts and then exhale on hiss for 4 counts

Inhale for 4 counts, hold your breath for 4 counts, exhale on hiss for 10 counts

Inhale for 10 counts, hold your breath for 10 counts, exhale on hiss for 10 counts

Inhale for 4 counts, hum a scale within 8 counts

5. **SOVT Exercises (Semi-Occluded Vocal Tract):** Use these exercises as a warmup and a cool down when you sing. What it does is bring your vocal cords to stasis and equilibrium by bouncing energy back to your vocal cords, meeting up with the air pressure coming from underneath your folds, which then allows your cords to vibrate with more ease without any effort from the throat or neck muscles. Great for when you are having a hard time making sound, lost your voice, or have been singing high-intensity songs all day.

Examples:

Lip Trills

Tongue Rolls

Straw Exercises

Voiced Fricatives

6. **Sleep and Rest:** This is so important for singers or for anyone who is participating in a physical activity that requires your muscles. When you go to sleep, you are allowing your body to recuperate and heal. Your muscles need time to recover. If you wake up the next day with not enough hours of sleep, your body will feel tired. When you feel tired, you will push for your body to put in more effort. When you push, you start tensing up. When you tense up you start to constrict your muscles and then it just makes everything worse. When you sing, you need to be relaxed and free. Sleeping will not only heal your muscles, but it will also rejuvenate your brain function which is needed for optimum performance. If your mind is not well, it will greatly affect how you sing. Make sure to rest your voice throughout the day. Basically, give it naps so that it won't dry out so quickly. Talking or singing requires air to go through the vocal cords and if too much air is passing through, that is when you feel like you need to clear your throat or cough.

Make sure you are taking care of your voice by practicing daily healthy habits, such as eating healthy foods, exercising regularly, staying hydrated, and practicing more often to build muscle strength. The way you live your life will show in your voice. Reduce your stress level and make time for yourself. Your entire well-being needs to be in check in order for your voice to work at peak level.

Practice with intention and have a strategy for better results:

Stretch  
Breathe  
Warm Up  
Practice a song  
Cool Down

Continue reading for more information on water, inhalers, and teas.

# Steam Inhalers

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# STEAM INHALERS

Steam inhalers can help with respiratory conditions and hydrating the insides of your mouth through vapors or droplets. It may relieve nasal congestion, dry throat, and coughs. Inhalers come in various sizes and lightweight. You can also control the temperature of the steam if you need it to be warmer.

Make sure you read the instructions for each machine before using. Use with caution and seek medical attention if you get a burn injury.

## Which brands should you buy?

MyPurMist



Vicks



MABIS



All devices are different so make sure you find the right one for you!

# STEAM INHALER USE



Make steaming part of your vocal care routine. This is to prevent future injuries, fatigue, or sickness. Since the water provided is purified, the clean water is very beneficial to your muscles.

Steam for about 20 minutes before singing and after singing. Breathe in through the nose and through the mouth. Alternate every 5 minutes.



Rest your voice for about 10-15 minutes after steaming. Do not vocalize right away. After you rest, start with gentle vocal warmups like humming, slides, lip trills, and gradually go into scales and longer patterns.

Keep the inhaler clean and don't let water sit in the equipment for weeks or mold with grow. Not good.



# Feeling Sick

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# WHEN YOU ARE SICK

All of the suggestions are not to be used in place of medical advice. Check with your doctor for allergic reactions or if something is more serious.

Best thing to do when you are sick is sleep and rest. Your body needs time to heal.

Eat healthy foods, vitamin C, and drink lots of water to detox your body.

## Teas

**Licorice Root Tea:** Great for sore throats, acid reflux, and indigestion. Helps to detoxify the body, eases cramps, eliminate respiratory infections, reduce inflammation, and protect skin.

*Side effects:* too much can lead to high blood pressure and stomach distress. This is due to consuming excessive amounts, so only drink when needed. No more than 3 cups of this tea a day until you feel better since it has a lot of potent compounds in the root.

**Ginger Tea:** This tea has a combination of ginger root and water. It has been used in Chinese medicine to help with nausea and reducing inflammation. All you do is steep a piece of fresh ginger into some boiling water, and then you drink it. You can add honey or lemon for some flavor if the ginger alone is too strong. It has no caffeine, unless you buy the bags with tea leaves. Other benefits of ginger tea are that it lowers stress levels by decreasing blood pressure, it can be a pain relief to sore muscles, and it supports the immune system due to its antioxidant properties.

*Side effects:* This tea doesn't usually cause problems, but too much consumption of it can lead to an upset stomach or heartburn.

## Singer's Saving Grace

This is a throat spray that is ideal for sore throats, laryngitis, hoarseness, coughs, dryness, or excess of thick mucus.

Read all ingredients before purchasing and make sure you are not allergic to those ingredients before spraying into your mouth.

*Main Ingredients:* Yerba Mansa root, Licorice root, Echinacea root, ginger root, and Glycerin. Can be taken alone or 1 tsp in glass of water.

*Caution:* Do not use during pregnancy. Again, read all instructions and reviews before buying.

# Hydration

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# WATER INTAKE GUIDE

## How much water should you drink?

For women: About 11.5 cups (2.7 liters) of fluids

For men: About 15.5 cups (3.7 liters) of fluids

To make it easier, drink at least 8 glasses of water to replenish your water supply, which gets lost through breathing, perspiration, urine, and other activities.

Remember that you might need to modify the amount of water when needed. If you exercise more or have a certain health situation that might require more water, then you will increase your intake.

Water is not the only option of getting hydrated. Try fruits and vegetables. Even juices and herbal teas are composed of water.

## How to know if you had enough water?

- Your urine is colorless or less yellow
- You don't feel dry or scratchy in the throat
- No headaches



# Daily Water Intake

| # of Glass | Mon | Tues | Wed | Thurs | Fri | Sat | Sun |
|------------|-----|------|-----|-------|-----|-----|-----|
| 1          |     |      |     |       |     |     |     |
| 2          |     |      |     |       |     |     |     |
| 3          |     |      |     |       |     |     |     |
| 4          |     |      |     |       |     |     |     |
| 5          |     |      |     |       |     |     |     |
| 6          |     |      |     |       |     |     |     |
| 7          |     |      |     |       |     |     |     |
| 8          |     |      |     |       |     |     |     |

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| 5          |     |      |     |       |     |     |     |
| 6          |     |      |     |       |     |     |     |
| 7          |     |      |     |       |     |     |     |
| 8          |     |      |     |       |     |     |     |

Hope this guide will help you take care of your voice and develop a healthy lifestyle to upkeep your technique.

Singing with strength and stamina takes time to build. If singing is something you really love to do, you will make the effort to care for it, and that means taking care of yourself.

Keep on singing and enjoy it with all your heart!





## Want more guides?

Become a voice student to get 1:1 training and be given more materials like this to help you exceed your limitations and sing with confidence.

[www.tinavocalstudio.com](http://www.tinavocalstudio.com)

### VOCAL PRACTICE GUIDE

1. Stretch
2. Breathe
3. Warm Up
4. Song
5. Cool Down

## Routine

### Neck & Shoulder Stretches



Side to Side Neck Tilt Stretch



Forward Neck Stretch



Side to Side Neck Turns



Overhead Side Reach



Cross Shoulder Stretch



Seated Forward Bend

### Practice Schedule Options

| Monday                                 | Tuesday               | Wednesday             | Thursday              | Friday                |
|--|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| Stretch/<br>Breathing                  | Stretch/<br>Breathing | Stretch/<br>Breathing | Stretch/<br>Breathing | Stretch/<br>Breathing |
| Warm up                                | Warm Up               | Warm Up               | Warm Up               | Warm Up               |
| Water                                  | Water                 | Water                 | Water                 | Water                 |
| Targeted<br>Exercises<br>Strengthening | Songs                 | Targeted<br>Exercises | Songs                 | Strengthening         |
| Cool Down                              | Cool Down             | Cool Down             | Cool Down             | Cool Down             |
| Water                                  | Water                 | Water                 | Water                 | Water                 |

| Monday                                 | Tuesday               | Thursday              | Friday                | Saturday              |
|--|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| Stretch/<br>Breathing                  | Stretch/<br>Breathing | Stretch/<br>Breathing | Stretch/<br>Breathing | Stretch/<br>Breathing |
| Warm Up                                | Warm Up               | Warm Up               | Warm Up               | Warm Up               |
| Water                                  | Water                 | Water                 | Water                 | Water                 |
| Targeted<br>Exercises<br>Strengthening | Songs                 | Targeted<br>Exercises | Songs                 | Strengthening         |
| Cool Down                              | Cool Down             | Cool Down             | Cool Down             | Cool Down             |
| Water                                  | Water                 | Water                 | Water                 | Water                 |

# Disclaimer

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# Disclaimer

This guide is for educational and informational purposes only.

The information provided in the guide is for educational and informational purposes only as a self-help tool for your own use. Tina's Vocal Studio instructors and staff are not responsible for any injuries or damages that might occur. You are using the guide at your own risk and we encourage you to do it at a pace that is comfortable for you. If anything is hurting, please stop right away and go see a doctor.

## **Not Medical Advice**

I am not, nor am I holding myself out to be a doctor/physician or any other medical related professionals. As a coach I am only providing advice that I am experienced on and will not provide health care advice including mental and physical health advice. By viewing and implementing this guide, you agree and acknowledge that I am not providing medical advice, mental health advice, or religious advice in any way. Always seek advice of your own Medical Provider and/or Mental Health Provider regarding any questions or concerns you have about your specific health needs.

## **Personal Responsibility**

By using this guide you are agreeing and acknowledging that you are participating voluntarily on using this guide and service associated with the studio. By agreeing to this, you understand that you are solely and personally responsible for your choices, actions, and results now and in the future. You accept full responsibility for the consequences of your use, or non-use, of any information provided on this guide and during lessons.

## **No Guarantees**

As a teacher and coach, I am here to support and assist you in reach your goals, but your success depends primarily on your own effort, motivation, and commitment. I cannot predict the results of your goal and I cannot determine a time frame on when you will reach your goals. Each individual's results depend on their own unique traits, background, work ethic, and other factors that might be taken into account when using this guide. By taking this guide you agree that there are no guarantees on specific outcomes or results you can expect from using the information in this guide.

## **Assumption of Risk**

As with many activities involving the body and muscles, there are individual risks involved that might arise when executing specific exercises, in which my studio and I cannot foresee. You agree that by using this guide, you are doing so at your own risk and understand the consequences that might happen if used improperly with no liability on my part, recognizing that there is a rare chance for injury, illness, or damage that could result and you agree to assume all risks.

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