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2008 Voice Tips for the Holidays

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#1

DRINK PLENTY OF WATER.

Staying well-hydrated keeps your airway defenses healthy. Your natural lubrication will be more effective and you can work less hard to produce your voice.

#2

AVOID SMOKE.

Tobacco smoke and other airborne irritants can cause your vocal cords to swell and ruin your sound. Try to stay away from smoky parties and never stand near a BBQ grill to talk.

#3

WASH YOUR HANDS OFTEN.

This will help you avoid the cold and flu viruses that tend to make the rounds during this time of year. Of course, be polite when people want to shake hands but remember to protect yourself by hand-washing and by not bringing your hands to your face too often.

#4

CHECK YOUR MEDICATIONS.

Some medications for allergies and other chronic conditions can dry you out. Ask your doctor or pharmacist if any of your medications can adversely affect your voice.

#5

BE MODERATE IN YOUR ALCOHOL INTAKE.

Not only does alcohol contribute to extra-esophageal reflux, we all know that people often speak at louder volumes after a few drinks. Remember that vocal professionals are more likely to injure the larynx during non-working voice use.

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#6

EAT EARLY.

This also relates to extra-esophageal reflux as eating large meals late increases the tendency towards reflux of stomach contents. Try to stay upright for 2-3 hours after eating and don't over-indulge .

#7

DO WARM-UPS.

Remember to train your voice as an athlete trains for a big event. You wouldn't run a marathon without doing a little jog and stretching, would you? Be just as kind to your voice and try some gentle humming before launching into a long program of carols.

#8

AMPLIFY WHEN NEEDED.

While projection may be part of formal voice training, don't overdo it. Today's microphone systems are discrete and can allow more of your audience to hear you clearly without straining yourself.

#9

KEEP YOUR FRIENDS CLOSE.

It is important to control the volume of your voice in social situations. Try not to yell from room to room in your home and in noisy settings, use a normal voice and lean in.

#10

LISTEN TO YOUR BODY.

If all else fails, give your voice a break. Voice rest allows your vocal cords to recover from overuse. Practice being a good listener, instead. People will find you attractive socially if you let them talk about themselves and don't interrupt.