

# DO'S AND DON'TS OF VOCAL HEALTH

Your voice is an instrument. Here are some basic ways to care for your instrument and maximize the gift God has given you.

## ***Do...***

- **Hydrate**
  - Hydration ensures lubricated vocal folds for easy, healthy singing.
- **Rest**
  - Take vocal “naps” if you have been singing/speaking for long periods of time.
- **Warm up and cool down**
  - Warmups increase blood-flow to your vocal folds and engage support muscles; Cool downs allow for quicker and easier recovery.
- **Use a humidifier or nebulizer**
  - Nebulizers allow for direct hydration and quicker recovery.
- **Eat well and exercise**
  - Diet can affect digestion, mucus in the throat, and overall performance and endurance; Exercise allows for better support, lung capacity, and endurance.

## ***Don't...***

- **Scream or shout**
  - Screaming at that Saturday night game won't set you up well to lead on Sunday morning. You are likely to wear out or injure your voice.
- **Talk too much**
  - Talking, especially in a loud environment, quickly fatigues your voice.
- **Sing through sickness or fatigue**
  - Unless it is necessary, give your voice a break to avoid injury.
- **Drink hot or cold beverages before singing**
  - Extreme temperatures negatively affect your singing voice.
- **Clear your throat often**
  - This causes irritation and more mucus buildup. Try a light cough, swallowing, humming, or doing vocal slides to clear away mucus.
- **Dry out your voice**
  - Alcohol, caffeinated beverages, decongestants, and certain medications all have drying effects on the voice.