WHEN SHOULD I SEE AN ENT?

- If the hoarseness lasts longer than three weeks, especially if you smoke.
- If you are hoarse, and you do not have a cold or the flu.
- If you are coughing up blood.
- If you have difficulty swallowing.
- If the voice change is impacting your quality of life.
- If you feel a lump in your throat or neck.
- If you’re observing loss or severe changes in voice lasting longer than a few days.
- If you’re experiencing pain when speaking or swallowing.
- If you’re having trouble breathing while speaking.

The University of Georgia Speech and Hearing Clinic offers comprehensive diagnostic and therapeutic services for patients of all ages with voice disorders, including:

- Voice screenings, evaluations and therapy, which can be used for all types of disorders
- Laryngeal videostroboscopy, which is a state-of-the-art equipment used to observe the vocal folds in slow motion so that structure and movement disorders can be assessed
- Lee Silverman Voice Treatment (LSVT), which helps patients with Parkinson’s disease and other neurological impairments to increase the volume of their speech

In addition to the services for identification, diagnosis and treatment of various voice disorders, we offer:

- Audiology services
- Hearing device evaluation and sales
- Speech-language pathology services
- Speech and hearing screenings
- Accent or dialect reduction/modification
- Transgender voice and communication services
- Communication support groups

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The University of Georgia tuân thủ luật quyền hiện hành của Liên bang và không phân biệt đối đối xử trên cơ sở chủng tộc, màu da, nguồn gốc quốc gia, độ tuổi, khuyết tật, hoặc giới tính.

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The UGA Speech and Hearing Clinic, housed within the Department of Communication Sciences and Special Education, is a clinical training site for graduate students earning a master’s degree in speech-language pathology. Here, students get hands-on training from experienced faculty and professionals, while providing comprehensive prevention, evaluation, and treatment of hearing, swallowing, and communication disorders and differences. Graduate students work under the supervision of state-licensed and nationally-certified audiologists and speech-language pathologists.

At the same time, the clinic provides a valuable service to the community, offering testing and screening for all ages for more than 60 years. We also provide hearing aid sales and service. Our services are on the forefront of current practices, based on the latest research.

WHAT IS A VOICE DISORDER?

A voice disorder is a problem involving abnormal pitch, loudness or quality.

- Pitch is the degree of highness or lowness of a tone
- Loudness is the degree of volume (loud or soft) of production
- Quality is the property of speech (roughness, hoarseness or breathiness)

**Causes**
- Voice misuse
- Medications
- Disease/illness
- Trauma
- Birth defects
- Vocal fatigue

**Symptoms**
- Hoarseness
- Voice change
- Chronic cough
- Shortness of breath

**Effects**
- Permanent or temporary damage of the vocal folds
- Voice disorders (e.g., laryngitis, dysphonia)
- Vocal fold disorders (e.g., nodules, polyps)
- Chronic laryngeal muscle tension

**Avoid**
- Clearing your throat or coughing habitually
- Yelling, cheering, or screaming habitually
- Smoking
- Excessively drinking alcohol or caffeine
- Talking in noisy situations (e.g., concerts, football games, bars/restaurants)
- Talking in a prolonged, unnatural voice (e.g., whisper)
- Consuming menthol, peppermint, and cinnamon when experiencing a sore throat

**Prevention**
- Drink plenty of water (48 oz./day)
- Speak slowly and pause naturally to reduce strain
- Speak softly in a natural pitch
- Limit vocal loudness
- Breathe from your abdomen rather than your chest/shoulders
- Reduce background noise, face the person with whom you are speaking, and move closer
- Learn to recognize the signs of vocal fatigue

HOW DOES YOUR VOICE WORK?

Inside the larynx, or voice box, there are two vocal folds (cords). They are open during breathing and closed during swallowing and voice production. When the vocal folds come together, and air from the lungs is pushed through the folds, a vibration is created. This buzzing sound is then passed through your throat, nose and mouth, where it is transformed into your voice. Therefore, voice changes often reflect an issue with the structure and function of the vocal folds.

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