

Larynx and Voice Strengthening Exercises

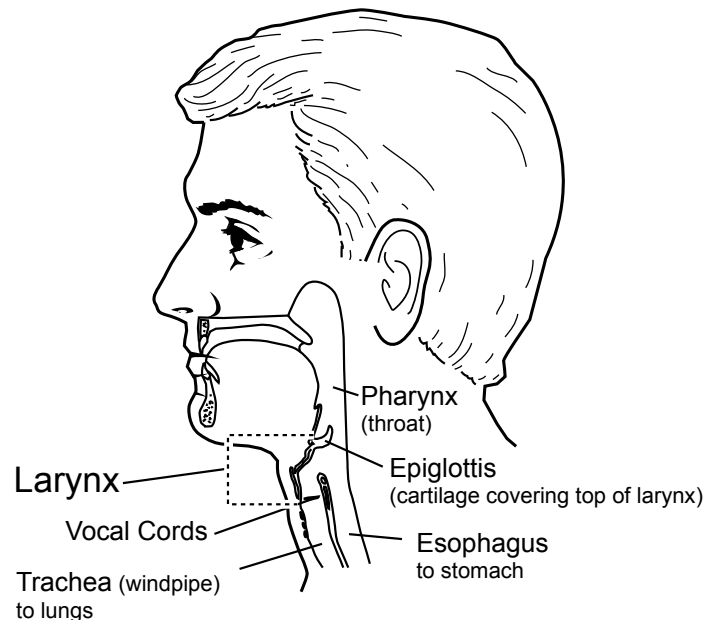


THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY
WEXNER MEDICAL CENTER

What is the larynx?

The larynx, also called the voice box, is the part of the throat where the vocal cords are. It is used when you breathe, swallow, and talk.

The larynx helps protect your windpipe, called the trachea, when you swallow. The larynx sits just below where the throat splits into the trachea and the esophagus. The trachea goes to your lungs and the esophagus goes to your stomach.



Why strengthen the larynx?

Larynx exercises help:

- Strengthen and increase the movement of the vocal cords
- Increase muscle movement in the larynx
- Improve closure of the larynx when swallowing

These exercises can help people with swallowing problems or those with poor voice quality.

If you have high blood pressure, check with your doctor or therapist before doing these exercises, as they may cause an increase in blood pressure.

Exercises

Do these exercises _____ times each day as directed by your speech therapist.

Sustained Vowels

Sit on a firm chair for these exercises.

- Hold the vowels “e” and “a” for as long and loud as you can. Try to hold for 14 to 17 seconds. Be sure to stop voicing before your voice fades out. Repeat 5 to 10 times.
- Repeat the sounds, this time pushing down with your arms on the seat of your chair. Bear your weight on your arms as you push. Make your voice as loud and smooth as you can. Repeat 5 to 10 times.

Syllable Repetition

- Say “ah ah ah” as loudly and clearly as you can. Repeat 10 times.

❑ Glides

- Hold the vowel “e” and glide smoothly up in pitch. The word “whoop” can also be used. Repeat 5 to 10 times.
- Hold the vowel “e” and glide smoothly down in pitch. The word “boom” can also be used. Repeat 5 to 10 times.

❑ Diaphragmatic Breathing

You use your diaphragm to breathe more deeply and easily.

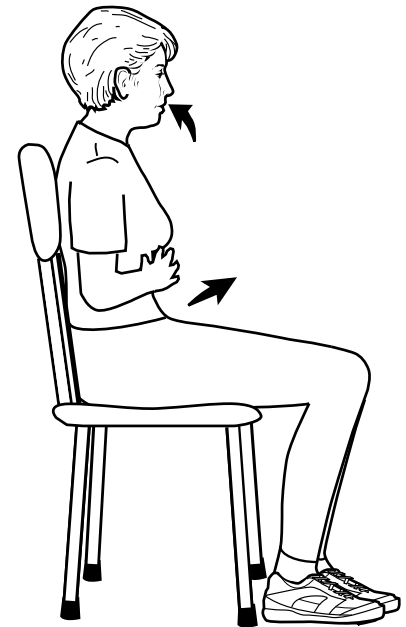
- Sit in a chair or stand up straight.
- Place both hands on your stomach.
- Breathe in through your nose and push out your stomach, so you feel your hands move.
- Let the air out slowly through your mouth and pull your stomach back in. Repeat 5 times.

Your voice may fade because you are running out of air:

When you start to feel like you are running out of air or you hear your voice getting softer, take another breath in with your stomach.

Practice these breaths while you read out loud: Reading out loud helps you learn to use this breathing when you are talking to people.

Also try: You can also use pinwheels, balloons, and your incentive spirometer to practice diaphragmatic breathing.



❑ Good Posture

Good posture is needed for the best breath support for speech. It is harder to maintain breath support when lying in bed or reclining in a chair.

Your speech language pathologist (SLP) can give you other activities to try.

Talk to your doctor or health care team if you have any questions about your care.

For more health information, contact the Library for Health Information at **614-293-3707** or e-mail **health-info@osu.edu**.