

FOR MORE INFORMATION

For more information about the Voice Image and Disorders Program please call 206.368.1848. A physician's referral is required for the Voice Disorder program. You do not need a physician referral to participate in the Voice Image program.



ETHICS STATEMENT

The Center for Medical Rehabilitation at Northwest Hospital is committed to ethical behavior in respect to the patient's right to participate and determine his/her own plan of care. To act for the well being of the patients and the members of the hospital's community. To provide fair, equitable, and appropriate treatment in accordance with the law. To effectively and respectfully work with a diverse cultural and ethnic mix of patients, visitors, and staff.

LOCATIONS & DIRECTIONS

From I-5 take exit 173.
Turn west on Northgate Way.
At Meridian Avenue North, turn right (North).
Take the first left onto 115th Street.

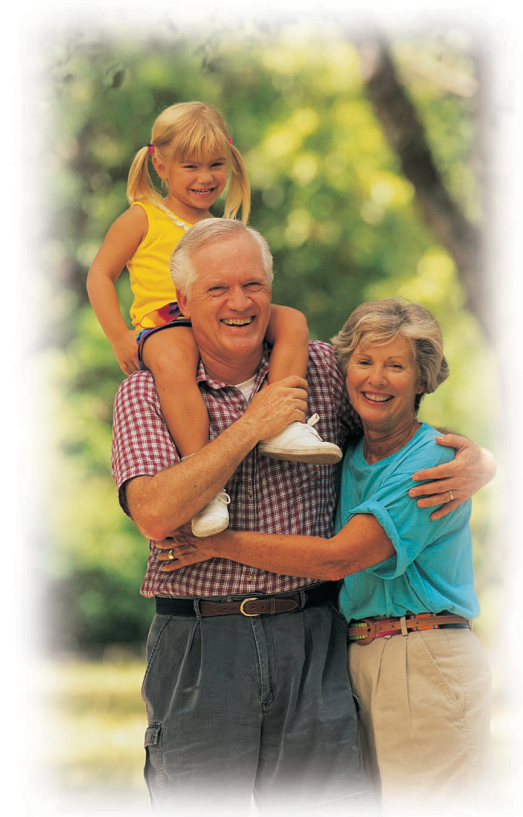


**NORTHWEST HOSPITAL
& MEDICAL CENTER**
Center for Medical Rehabilitation

1550 North 115th Street
Seattle, WA 98133
www.nwhospital.org

Call: 206.368.1848

VOICE IMAGE AND VOICE DISORDER PROGRAM



*Specializing in the treatment of both
voice image and voice disorders.*



**NORTHWEST HOSPITAL
& MEDICAL CENTER**
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INTRODUCTION


What does your voice say about you? Your voice plays an integral role in the way that you communicate, express your emotions, and establish your individuality. Your voice reflects many different aspects of your personality. It's what makes you unique.

But what do you do when –

- You lose your voice?
- You have trouble projecting your voice?
- Your voice has been hoarse, raspy, or breathy for more than three weeks?
- Your voice gets “tired” or “strained” after prolonged talking?

Many voice problems occur from misusing the voice, such as cheering at a sports event until you get hoarse, talking too loudly, or using a too-high or too-low pitch. Improper breathing patterns may also cause voice problems, as can excessive smoking.

Continued vocal abuse can damage the vocal folds and cause temporary or permanent changes in vocal function, voice quality, and possibly loss of voice. Diseases such as cancer, Parkinson's disease, amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (Lou Gehrig's disease), multiple sclerosis, or stroke may also cause changes in the voice.



Voice Image - Voice image is how others perceive the pitch, loudness, quality, and vocal variety of your voice. Does your voice suit you as an individual and communicate your thoughts and ideas? The focus of voice image training is to help you develop your optimal or most natural voice.



Voice Disorder - A voice disorder is any abnormality of the voice production system that results in a change in your voice. The symptoms may be persistent or you may experience them only intermittently. If you have hoarseness, voice change or discomfort that lasts more than ten days, you should have an examination by a medical doctor. An ear, nose, and throat doctor or otolaryngologist is the specialist trained to diagnose voice disorders and can refer you to this program.

THE VOICE IMAGE AND DISORDERS PROGRAM

The Speech Language Services Department at Northwest Hospital & Medical Center offers a Voice Image and Disorders program for individuals who face voice challenges. Our Speech Language Pathologists can help you improve your voice, learn good voice habits, retrain use of your voice, and teach you strategies to avoid voice misuse.

Voice is highly personal. What works for one person may not for another. Speech Language Pathologists work with you to create an individually tailored treatment plan to help you achieve the best possible voice and the most relief from the symptoms that brought you to our program.

The Voice Image and Voice Disorders Program at Northwest Hospital & Medical Center includes:

- Information about the anatomy and function of the voice system – how sound is made, the difference between voice and speech, how loudness and pitch are controlled.
- Breathing, relaxation, and voice exercises.
- Education and training to change behavior and keep the voice production system healthy.
- Techniques to maximize the quality of your voice.
- Reference materials.



The specific therapy will depend on the symptoms you are experiencing and the underlying cause. Voice therapy sessions are generally scheduled for 30 minutes to an hour, one-to-three times per week for two-to-four weeks.

COMPUTERIZED TOOLS

Speech Language Pathologists use a computerized voice analysis system, SonaSpeech, to perform a voice assessment and provide real-time feedback during your therapy. A baseline of your voice will be taken which includes acoustic parameters such as pitch, volume, voice quality, rate, and inflection patterns. You will learn how these voice parameters affect the way your voice is perceived by others and how to modify parameters to maximize communication effectiveness. Your baseline results will be used to compare your progress.

During therapy, you will be able to immediately hear your voice and see a visual representation of the voice you just produced. You can then compare your actual voice with the “desired” voice you are working to achieve.