



Carolina Ear, Nose & Throat Head and Neck Surgery Center

Vocal Misuse and Abuse

Minimize misuse:

- Pace your voice use throughout the day
 - Stagger telephone use
 - Use headset when talking on telephone
 - Avoid cell phones
 - Use email communication when possible
 - Avoid unnecessary talking
- Minimize background noise in your environment

Minimize abuse:

- Avoid yelling/shouting or loud talking
- Avoid harsh crying or loud laughing
- Do not strain to speak when sick
- Avoid sustained vocal tasks (long talking)
- Limit throat clearing
- Avoid unnecessary coughing

Techniques:

- Sit/stand within touching distance of your conversational partners, focus voice toward your listener
- Use the 60/10 rule: for every 60 minutes you speak continuously, rest your voice for 10 minutes
- Use alternatives to throat clearing
 - Sip of water and swallow
 - Voiceless throat clear
 - Blow quick “h”s to clear mucus off the vocal cords
 - Consider ENT evaluation to determine etiology of throat clearing