



Hydration & Your Voice

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HYDRATION

We have all heard the recommendation to drink at least 64 ounces of water per day, but how is that helpful to our voice? The vocal folds rely on a lubricated surface for optimal conditions for vibration. Although nothing you eat or drink should ever pass over your vocal folds, if you drink enough non-caffeinated fluids throughout your day, the mucus secreted is more likely to be non-viscous (less sticky). Water or water-based drinks are best for providing adequate hydration, while products with caffeine tend to dry. (For a listing of the amount of caffeine in given products:

<http://www.mayoclinic.com/health/caffeine/AN01211> or <http://wellness.uwsp.edu/medinfo/handouts/LAs/Caffeine.pdf>).

Medications can also have a drying effect on the voice, so check with your pharmacist for potential systemic side effects of a given medication (For a listing of the most commonly prescribed medications and their effects on voice:

<http://www.ncvs.org/ncvs/info/vocol/rx.html>). Additionally, there are many holistic drugs that may also impact the voice (<http://www.lavallemetabolicinstitute.com/pages/content/charts.html>).

Several situations may warrant increased hydration from the recommended 64 ounces. If you exercise, you will require more fluid intake than normal. Additionally, if you work or live in a dry climate or environment, supplementary fluids will help to counterbalance the dryness. Steam inhalation has become increasingly popular. Although it does not provide a substitute for drinking fluids, it can be used as an ancillary aid. Cool mist vaporizers or warm air humidifiers can provide additional humidity to a room. For an idea of how much fluid you should be consuming this website provides a guideline (<http://www.hydroxycut.com/calculators/water.shtml>).

Always check with your physician if you are experiencing unusual mouth or throat dryness.
