



WORLD VOICE DAY

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News Release

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ENT Doctors Celebrate the Importance of Voice this Election Season

April 16 is World Voice Day

Alexandria, Va. - During this election season, the significance of a candidate's voice is both literal and figurative. The race for the White House reminds us that one single voice can influence a nation and change the course of history. It is with this spirit that the American Academy of Otolaryngology – Head and Neck Surgery (AAO-HNS) celebrates World Voice Day on April 16 with the theme of "Let Your Voice Be Heard."

The human voice is a powerful symbol of the right to communicate opinions and beliefs, but it is also a very physical part of everyday life. As candidates stump the campaign trail delivering speeches, talking one-on-one with voters, and giving countless interviews, they realize how critical it is to maintain proper vocal health.

Unfortunately, it is estimated that up to 7 million Americans suffer from some form of voice disorder, which can greatly impact their lives and ability to express themselves.

World Voice Day gives vocal health experts the opportunity to highlight the magnitude of vocal health to the general public and to professionals who have built careers around their voices. The 2008 theme, "Let Your Voice Be Heard," is the perfect opportunity to remind our political leaders to conserve their indispensable voices.

As AAO-HNS celebrates the seventh year of the observance, ENT doctors offer some tips to keep the candidates in tip-top vocal shape:

- Drink plenty of water. Moisture is good for your voice. Hydration helps to keep thin secretions flowing to lubricate your vocal cords.
- Try not to scream or yell. These are abusive practices for your voice, and put great strain on the lining of the vocal cords.
- Warm up your voice before heavy use. Warm-ups can be simple, such as gently gliding from low to high tones on different vowel sounds, doing lip trills (like the motorboat sound that kids make), or tongue trills.
- Use good breath support. Breath flow is the power for voice. Take time to fill your lungs before starting to talk, and don't wait until you are almost out of air before taking another breath to power your voice.
- Use a microphone. When giving a speech or presentation, consider using a microphone to lessen the strain on your voice.



"Listen to your voice! It may be telling you something!"

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- Listen to your voice when it is complaining to you. Know that you need to modify and decrease your voice use if you become hoarse to allow your vocal cords to recover. Pushing your voice when it's already gruff can lead to significant problems. If your voice is hoarse frequently, or for an extended period of time, you should be evaluated by an otolaryngologist, a physician trained to treat disorders of the ears, nose, and throat.

In addition to these suggestions, new tools created for the 2008 observance include: "How the Voice Works" fact sheet; World Voice Day public service announcement; and a World Voice Day podcast.

To learn more about World Voice Day, vocal health, and other ear, nose, and throat related topics, visit www.entnet.org.

About the AAO-HNS

The American Academy of Otolaryngology – Head and Neck Surgery (www.entnet.org), one of the oldest medical associations in the nation, represents more than 13,000 physicians and allied health professionals who specialize in the diagnosis and treatment of disorders of the ears, nose, throat, and related structures of the head and neck. The Academy serves its members by facilitating the advancement of the science and art of medicine related to otolaryngology and by representing the specialty in governmental and socioeconomic issues. The organization's mission: "Working for the Best Ear, Nose, and Throat Care."

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