
The Throat and the Voice, by J. Solis Cohen, M.D.
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The Throat and The Voice: Part 2, Chapter 9: Care of the Voice

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CHAPTER IX

CARE OF THE VOICE.

A PROPER method of producing vocal sound having been secured, it is important that proper care be taken of the voice.

It should not be fatigued by too long exercise at any one time, and the limits of salutary exercise vary in individual cases, just as with muscular exercise in general. As soon as the parts begin to feel dry and uncomfortable, and a sense of effort is felt necessary to produce the results which up to that time followed without consciousness of special effort, that moment, or as soon after it as at all practicable, the use of the voice should be suspended. The vocal effort should not be made during fatigue or hunger. Rest is requisite in the one instance, and a slight repast in the other. The voice should not be exercised, either, after a hearty meal, for a full stomach interferes with the free play of the diaphragm, and consequently with normal abdominal respiration. In addition to this, as the pharynx is part and parcel of the alimentary apparatus, it participates in the increased circula-

tion through that apparatus during active digestion, and is thus impaired for the time as a perfect resonator or reinforcer of the voice.

If the throat becomes dry during the use of the voice, it may be moistened at convenient intervals by taking a sip of water, which should be held in the mouth a moment or two before it is swallowed. Deep draughts of water flood the stomach too much, and afford no greater relief to the parching throat. With proper voice production, the sip of water is never necessary. The habit of resorting to it should be broken up as speedily as practicable. Ice may be held in the mouth during the intervals of repose between performances, if more agreeable than water, as it often is. The use of lozenges is rarely of advantage for these purposes, and those lozenges composed of pure gum or gelatine are the most efficacious. A good article of jujube paste, plain or acidulated, may be used. Medicated lozenges are apt to be detrimental, unless properly selected for some special influence that may be desirable at the time.

The voice should not be used for public purposes during ever so mild an attack of sore throat, or any indisposition that makes its use require unusual effort.