Protecting Your Vocal Health

Student Information Sheet

National Association of Schools of Music
Performing Arts Medicine Association

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Protecting Your Vocal Health
An NASM – PAMA Student Information Sheet

• Vocal health is important for all musicians and essential to lifelong success for singers.

• Understanding basic care of the voice is essential for musicians who speak, sing, and rehearse or teach others.

• Practicing, rehearsing, and performing music is physically demanding.

• Musicians are susceptible to numerous vocal disorders.

• Many vocal disorders and conditions are preventable and/or treatable.

• Sufficient warm-up time is important.

• Begin warming up mid-range, and then slowly work outward to vocal pitch extremes.

• Proper alignment, adequate breath support, and correct physical technique are essential.

• Regular breaks during practice and rehearsal are vital in order to prevent undue physical or vocal stress and strain.

• It is important to set a reasonable limit on the amount of time that you will practice in a day.

• Avoid sudden increases in practice times.

• Know your voice and its limits, and avoid overdoing it or misusing it.

• Maintain healthy habits. Safeguard your physical and mental health.

• Drink plenty of water in order to keep your vocal folds adequately lubricated. Limit your use of alcohol, and avoid smoking.

• Day-to-day decisions can impact your vocal health, both now and in the future. Since vocal strain and a myriad of other injuries can occur in and out of school, you also need to learn more and take care of your own vocal health on a daily basis. Avoid shouting, screaming, or other strenuous vocal use.

• If you are concerned about your personal vocal health, talk with a medical professional.

• If you are concerned about your vocal health in relationship to your program of study, consult the appropriate contact person at your institution.

• This information is provided by the National Association of Schools of Music (NASM) and the Performing Arts Medicine Association (PAMA). For more information, check out the other NASM-PAMA neuromusculoskeletal health documents, located on the NASM Web site at the URL linked below.

• See also the NASM/PAMA Student Information Sheet on “Protecting Your Neuromusculoskeletal Health.” Vocal health is an aspect of neuromusculoskeletal health.