

Treatment Efficacy

Voice Disorders

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This article reviews the literature on the efficacy of treatment for voice disorders primarily using studies published in peer-reviewed journals. Voice disorders are defined, their frequency of occurrence across the life span is reported, and their impact on the lives of individuals with voice disorders is documented. The goal of voice treatment is to maximize vocal effectiveness given the existing disorder and to reduce the handicapping effect of the voice problem. Voice treatment may be (a) the preferred treatment to resolve the voice disorder when medical (surgical or pharmacological) treatments are not indicated; (b) the initial treatment in cases where medical treatment appears indicated; it may obviate the need for medical treatment; (c) completed before and after surgical treatment to maximize long-term post-surgical voice; and (d) a preventative treatment to preserve vocal health. Experimental and clinical data are reviewed that support these roles applied to various disorder types: (a) vocal misuse, hyperfunction and muscular imbalance (frequently resulting in edema, vocal nodules, polyps or contact ulcers); (b) medical or physical conditions (e.g., laryngeal nerve trauma, Parkinson disease); and (c) psychogenic disorders (e.g., conversion reactions, personality disorders). Directions for future research are suggested which

maximize clinical outcomes and scientific rigor to enhance knowledge on the efficacy of voice treatment.

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