

Voice and Swallowing Disorders

Sarasota Memorial Outpatient Rehabilitation

Surgery, chemotherapy and radiation therapy to the head and neck area for cancers of the mouth or throat can often cause problems with voice and swallowing. Specialized speech-language pathologists can help improve both voice and swallowing functions resulting in clearer communication and safer, more efficient swallowing.

Potential voice and swallowing side effects of radiation therapy and/or chemotherapy:

- ▶ Dry mouth (xerostomia)
- ▶ Difficulty swallowing (dysphagia)
- ▶ Redness, irritation, and sores in your throat or mouth (mucositis)
- ▶ Taste changes, loss of taste, metallic taste, bland taste, taste fatigue (dysgeusia)
- ▶ Hoarseness, volume difficulty, pitch changes, breathy voice (dysphonia)
- ▶ Lymphedema of the face or neck area

Voice therapy is a common treatment for people with a voice that is weak, rough, raspy, hoarse, breathy, painful, or tires easily. Most voice problems can be reversed by treating the underlying cause or through a range of medical, behavioral and surgical treatment options.

Beyond cancer treatment, additional causes of voice problems can include:

- ▶ Improper voice use, over-use, and/or misuse of the voice system
- ▶ Inflammation caused by gastroesophageal reflux (acid reflux, heartburn, GERD)
- ▶ Surgery to the mouth or throat
- ▶ Upper respiratory infections
- ▶ Growths on the vocal folds, such as nodules, polyps, cysts or papillomatosis
- ▶ Neurological diseases such as spasmodic dysphonia or vocal fold paralysis
- ▶ Laryngeal trauma
- ▶ Psychological trauma

Our speech-language pathology team offers services including:

- ▶ Clinical and instrumental voice evaluations
- ▶ Clinical and instrumental swallowing evaluations
- ▶ Voice therapy
- ▶ Swallowing therapy
- ▶ Lymphedema therapy after head and neck cancer treatment
- ▶ Dysphonia, dysphagia and trismus prevention therapy before, during and after radiation
- ▶ Speaking pattern and vocal behavior therapy to improve vocal cord function
- ▶ Assessment and treatment of disorders that affect the larynx

For more information or to schedule an appointment, call (941) 262-1110.

Sarasota Memorial Outpatient Rehabilitation

1901 Floyd Street, Suite 302, Sarasota, FL 34239 • smh.com/rehab

