

# LIFE LONG SINGING

- THE CARE OF THE SENIOR VOICE -

Jordan Travis  
jordan.travis@gmail.com

# QUESTIONS

What happens to the voice as it ages?

Are vocal issues unavoidable?

Are vocal problems preventable?

Can I recover age-related voice issues?

When should I stop singing?

# BIOLOGICAL AGE VS. CHRONOLOGICAL AGE

## BIOLOGICAL AGING VERSUS CHRONOLOGICAL AGING

<b>Influencing Factors</b>	Can be influenced by lifestyle and feeding habits	Cannot be influenced by any external factors
<b>Causes</b>	Body cells age in proportion to how you take care of your body	Body cells age as time of life continues to progress up to old age.
<b>Effect</b>	A person's body will be as good as they take care of it	A person's body will continue to work, but will deteriorate with time.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=S5JU95a2Z0o&feature=youtu.be>

# AGE-RELATED FACTORS

## Muscles

- Loss of muscle fibre density
- Loss of elasticity
- Results in bowed folds

## Neuromuscular

- Central nervous system slows down

## Mucous Membranes

- Decrease in mucous secretions

# AGE-RELATED FACTORS

## Joint Surface Erosion

- Arthritis

## Lung Capacity

- Intercostal muscles can experience atrophy
- More residual air

## Ageing Bodies

- Become more stiff and less mobile

# AGE-RELATED FACTORS

## Cartilage Ossification

- Thyroid and cricoid begin changing in the early 20's

## Reduced Blood Flow

- Injuries are much more likely

# RELATED AGEING ISSUES

- Obesity (Hypothyroidism)
- GERD or Acid Reflux
- Medications (many are drying)
- More serious illness
- Surgeries are more frequent (intubation tube size matters)

# HEARING

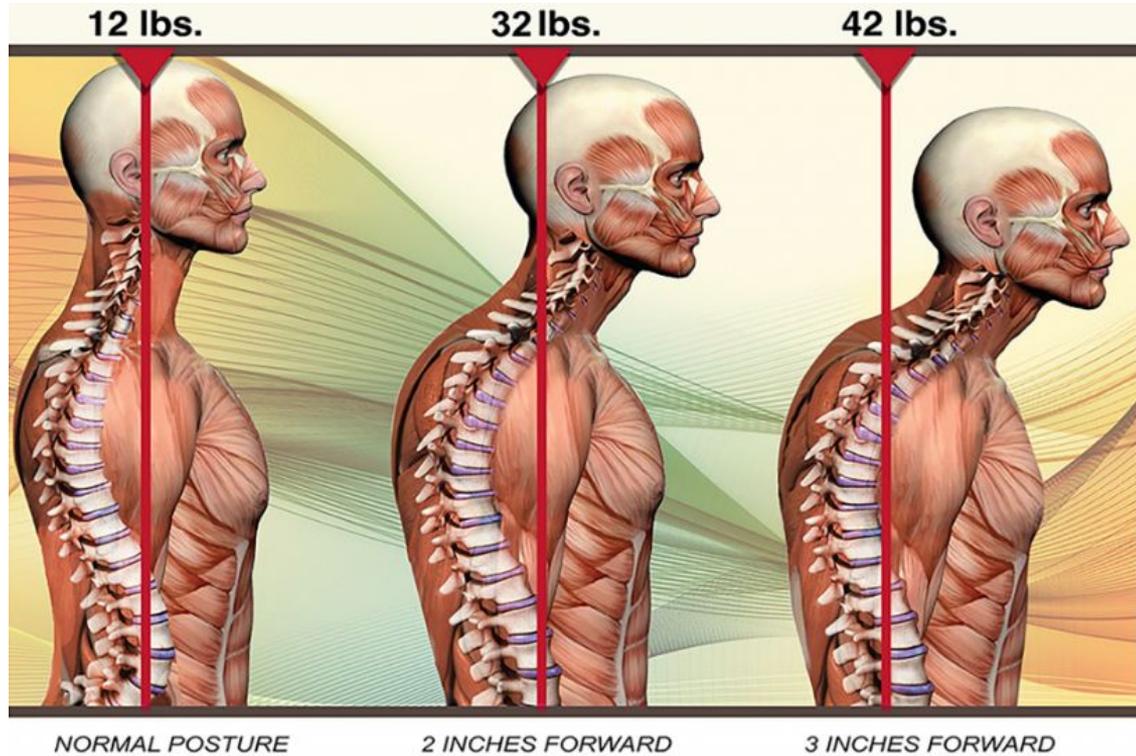
## Conductive Loss

- Prevent transfer to inner-ear
  - Affects the ability to monitor own voice
- Arthritis in ossicles (tiny ear bones)
- Ear infections more likely

## Sensorineural Loss

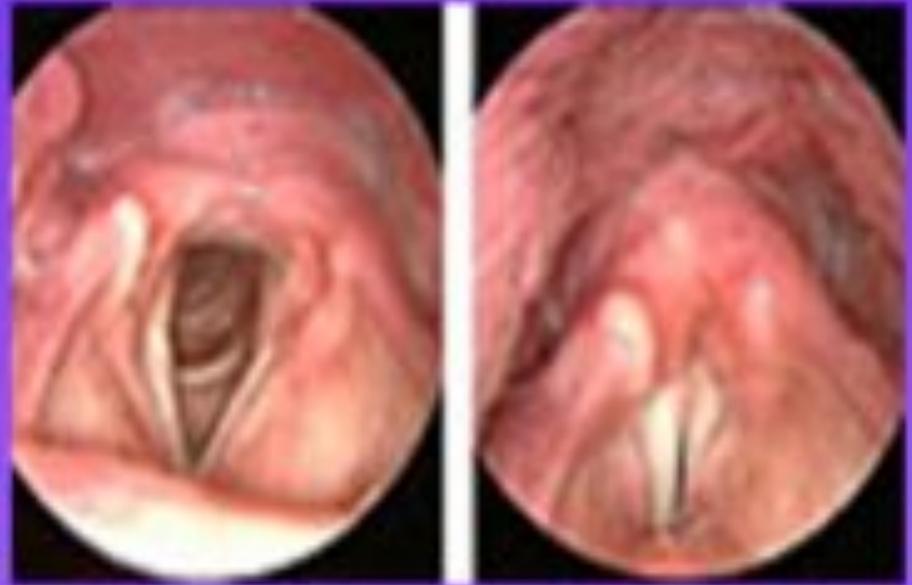
- Problems in the inner-ear (cochlea, auditory, brain)
- Noise-induced hearing loss

# POSTURE



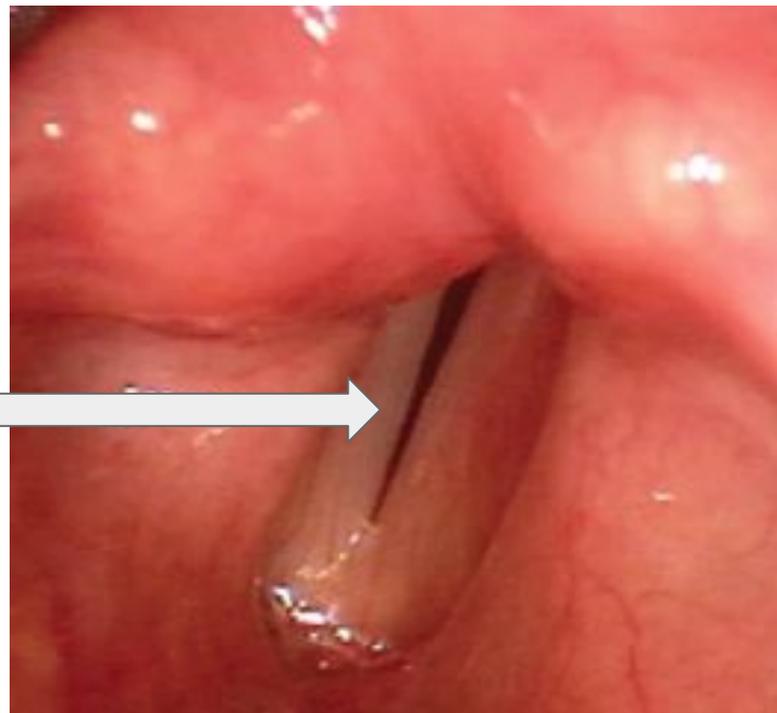
The brain perceives the head's weight as increasing by 10 lbs. for every inch it migrates forward

# THE AGING LARYNX



# BOWING

Incomplete vocal fold closure



# BOWING EXAMPLES

An inside scope of a patient with bowed vocal folds

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=S8nXkpxkBto&feature=youtu.be>

Walter Breuning - an example of what it sounds like

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l\\_DHLvmKt7A&feature=youtu.be](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l_DHLvmKt7A&feature=youtu.be)

# HORMONE LOSS

## In Men

- Testosterone production decreases
  - Can start to raise voice pitch

## In Women

- Estrogen production decreases
- Testosterone production stays constant
  - Can lower pitch

# MENOPAUSE

- Ages 40-60
- Stages: pre, peri, post
- Vocally unstable period for women time for women
- Range adjustments are necessary for many singers
- Many experience a new vocal stabilization

# VOCAL QUALITIES

- Less supple folds
  - Loss of high notes
  - Loss of intensity
- Change in Timbre
  - Breathy tones, huskiness
  - Breathy press (extrinsic muscles helping closure)
- Vibrato
  - Tension related
  - Neurological
  - Aerodynamic

# MEDICINE

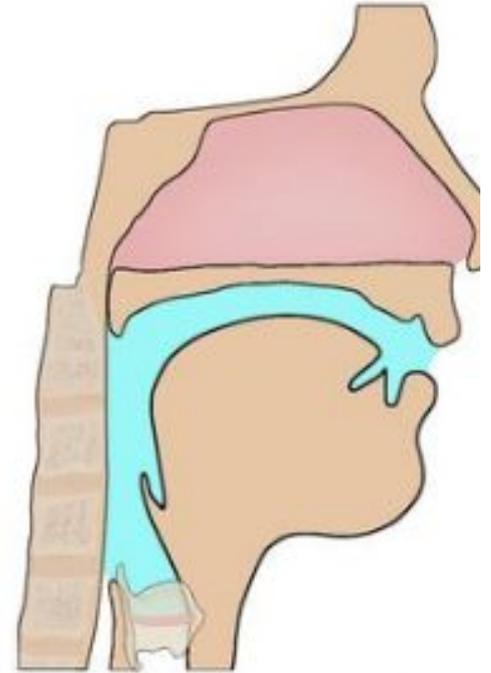
- What goes in your body can make a huge impact on your voice.
- Check your medications
  - <http://ncvs.org/rx.html>

# PREVENTION & RESTORATION

- Stay fit
- Stay hydrated
- Sleep well
- Nutrition
- Sing regularly
- Speak well
- Professional Help
  - Medical
  - Clinical

# VOCAL EXERCISES (DAILY)

- SOVT - Semi-Occluded Vocal Tract Exercises
  - Reduce phonation threshold pressure
  - Encourage back pressure
  - Vocal folds close more efficiently
    - Lip trills
    - “V” or “Z”
    - Tongue Trills
    - Straw
    - Cup/Funnel



# MORE EXERCISES

- Speech connection
  - Connect efficient speech with singing
  - Creaky voice to singing
- Staccato
  - Like weight lifting for your voice
  - The shorter the better - glottal can be your friend
- Consonant Help - to encourage better closure
  - G, Y, M, N, B, V, Z

# THINGS TO CHECK OUT

1. [www.VoiceScienceWorks.org](http://www.VoiceScienceWorks.org)
2. The British Voice Association - <https://www.britishvoiceassociation.org.uk/>
3. Dr. Dan's Voice Essentials - <https://www.youtube.com/user/Catafat94>
4. The Diagnosis and Correction of Vocal Faults - James McKinney

QUESTIONS?