TIPS FOR A HEALTHY VOICE

Voices will continue to change throughout an individual’s life. In Middle School, voices are in the process of changing and developing in a dramatic way and that includes girls and boys. Some of you may have chorus experience. I’m going to teach exercises and techniques for everybody in a fun way. Here’s some tips to stay healthy.

1. Learn proper breath control.
2. Learn good vocal warm-ups and do them.
3. Learn natural vocal techniques that keep your voice open and free from strain while speaking and singing and practice them all the time.
4. Practice good vocal techniques while speaking and singing.
5. Practice good posture all the time. Avoid slouching, rolling the shoulders forward, holding your backpack on one shoulder, etc.
6. Drink plenty of water. Roughly 8X8oz or you can google calculations based on your body weight. If you are sweating because of heat or exercise, you need more.
7. Limit caffeine. Caffeine causes your body to lose fluids.
8. Avoid foods that cause allergies, reflux or excess mucus. This is going to vary from one individual to another. One person might be able to tolerate dairy or spicy foods just fine and another might have problems. Do your best to be aware of your individual reaction to different kinds of foods. If you think you have food allergies, consult a doctor!
9. Avoid overusing your voice: shouting at sports events, etc, talking in noisy places, continuing to talk or sing if your voice is horse. Cheerleaders need to be extra careful projecting your voice properly. \*Please let me know if you are involved in this activity.
10. Avoid mouthwash or gargles that contain alcohol or other irritating chemicals. Biotene is a good one for moisturizing. Check the labels.
11. Avoid overuse of mentholated throat lozenges. These can be great for soothing a sore throat or clearing out gunk but they tend to dry out the throat lining so use sparingly and supplement with plain hard candy.
12. Use a humidifier during the winter months and keep it clean.
13. Wash your hands often and practice good hygiene to prevent colds and flu.
14. Sneeze and cough into your elbow so you don’t share your germs with your cast mates.
15. Take Care of yourself:
    1. Eat a well balanced diet
    2. Exercise and stretch regularly
    3. Get enough sleep
    4. Stay on top of your other homework and chores early.
16. You can do everything right and still get sick. Let your parents know and let us know if you are having vocal problems. Go to the doctor if hoarseness persists for more than 3 days or if you have a fever or very sore throat.
17. Breath steam: in the shower, put hot water in a bowl with a towel over your head or you can purchase an inexpensive personal steamer.
18. Drink non-caffinated herbal tea like Lemon, Ginger and Honey. My favorite brand is Bigelow Lemon-Ginger (you can use any brand you like) with plenty of whatever honey you like. I have a recipe using real lemons and ginger I can share.