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Dysphonia

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Synonyms

[Voice disorder](#)

Definition

A voice disorder, or dysphonia, can be characterized as a disruption in vocal quality, pitch, loudness, resonance, and/or duration that draws attention to itself, is inappropriate for a person's age, sex, and/or culture, and that may not meet an individual's occupational needs. The patient's voice may be described using terms such as *hoarse, rough, strained, breathy, weak, or tremulous*.

Dysphonia may result from functional etiologies (such as muscle tension dysphonia), or may

have an anatomical or physiological (organic) etiology, including growths on the vocal folds of benign, viral or carcinogenic origin, laryngopharyngeal reflux, vocal fold injuries and scarring, inflammation, edema, paresis or paralysis of the vocal folds (unilateral or bilateral), aging, phonotrauma, or a variety of neurological conditions. Voice disorders have been found to have a negative impact on quality of life in adults and children, and can be treated behaviorally, medically, or surgically.

Cross-References

► [Aphonia](#)

References and Readings

- Merati, A. L., & Bielamowicz, S. A. (Eds.). (2007). *Textbook of voice disorders*. San Diego: Plural Publishing.
- Stemple, J. C., Glaze, L. E., & Klaben, B. G. (2000). *Clinical voice pathology, theory and management* (3rd ed.). Clifton Park: Delmar Learning.