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Dear Doctor / Colleague,

This letter will shed some light on:

Vocal Cords Physiotherapy or the true art of voice therapy.

Physiotherapy is teaching the patient's body to heal itself by new movements and muscular procedures. Our body has a tremendous capability of self-healing and since the old times physical therapy has been able to heal many disorders by teaching the right movements.

In voice therapy, we do recognize physiotherapy as a great tool that can change the outcome of a treatment between 10%-50%.

Vocal cords are no exception, since most voice therapists give various techniques to various cases it is an art as well as a science to choose the right muscular corrective movements in order "to fix the engine" of voice.

Simply put, the vocal cords should be closed (close glottis) when we speak for them to get hit with bursts of air and to move producing a sound wave (our basic voice!) in the air above them. Then, they should be open to give way for air to come into the lungs (open glottis) usually in silence.

In many voice cases, this is not the case, and it does not make much of a difference if a speech pathologist will choose to teach you abdominal breath support, ribs breath support, upper breath support, or any other breath support technique if the vocal cords themselves are not in a best position for voice production.

Yes, breath support will improve the sound, it will change the efforts you put in your speech production, it will give you more air to talk with...but a tank full of gas will not make the motor run faster if the motor itself does not coordinates properly ! Likewise, good air support is vital, but will not make a big difference if the vocal cords will stay open!

So, Vocal Cords Physiotherapy is quite important! In order to make a better voice your speech pathologist should know which drills to choose, which muscles to move, how many times a day, and to what extent of movement in order to make a permanent positive change in the way your vocal cords move and coordinate the complex voice production to sound better and produce a better voice output. This is the true art of voice therapy!

I will try to make this process clearer; the first stage is to have a full video-stroboscopic examination (or a laryngoscopy) at your ENT surgeon clinic. Nowadays, technology can produce exquisite shots or even a full video movie of the layout, positions, and closure dynamics of your vocal cords while phonating (making a sound). Then, with these findings you come to your speech pathologist who will examine your speech and voice production and will analyze the stroboscopic/laryngoscopic findings further to see what is wrong with your “engine” – Then, comes the crucial part, deciding which vocal cords physiotherapy drills will achieve the best possible results in your case, usually combined with the breath support technique you’ll get daily vocal cords physiotherapy to do for 60/90/120 days...Every 60 days your speech pathologist will refer you back for another stroboscopic/Laryngoscopic examination at your ENT surgeon clinic in order to make sure the vocal cords physiotherapy is correcting your vocal cords layout for better sound and voice production, then your speech pathologist will either change the drills and keep you going for another 60 days or order you to stop your vocal cords physiotherapy all together if your goal has been achieved and your vocal cords are moving freely and close the gap between them at the exact moment of voice production. Thus, a full treatment of vocal cords physiotherapy is mandatory in any event of finding that a gap is left between the vocal cords while phonating (via the ENT examination) and air is escaping between the vocal cords causing a hoarse/harsh voice sound. It will take at least 60 days of working out on the specific drills the speech pathologist will choose for your case, and then go back to another ENT examination.

The good news, the physiotherapy is not hard to do, and it takes only about 5 minutes per day only , and if the patient is consistent in doing it permanent good results always come, and combined with improved breath support technique, most voice disorders are eliminated.

I trust you have gained some insight from this educational note. I appreciate the opportunity of being of service to you and your patients. Please e-mail me at galslp@gmail.com if you would like this or previous information to be sent to you via e-mail in a digital format.

Thank you,

Gal Levy, M.S., CCC-SLP