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Water: Sound Advice for Singers

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You're singing... and sweating. A friend says smugly: "I drink 12.5 glasses of water a day".

You can't be bothered. All of this measuring sounds like a lot of work. What's the big deal about drinking so much water?

Dr. Ron Scherer explains: "I ask my students to clap their hands hard – there is a slight stinging sensation. Then, I ask them to do the same thing with a little soapy water: no sting. When you're singing, your vocal folds are essentially slapping together. What the singer needs is a "cushion" between the folds and this is achieved by having a nice mucus coating on the vocal folds. This coating requires proper hydration.

"If you are not well-hydrated the vocal folds can become irritated more quickly, leading to redness and swelling. For physicians, this is called a 'predisposing condition' – leading more easily to vocal fold changes and issues".

So, an inadequate intake of water is certainly not ideal for a singer. Vocal Coach Melissa Cross adds: "Maybe you don't care about being ideal; you can still do a show. But why not strive to be at your optimum for performance?"

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How Much H₂O?

Most experts recommend six to eight glasses of water a day, but there is no "magic amount".

Everyone's body is different and glands work in unique ways. As a general rule of thumb, Scherer says: "The more you use up water, the more you have to ingest to maintain a good balance".

Singers use up more water if they are sweating during performances, or simply working in a hot, dry venue. It's easy to become dehydrated without even knowing it.

Speech Therapist Ruth Epstein urges singers not to wait for the interval and then rush and drink all that they can: "Water should not be "glugged" as a punishment but sipped throughout the day and throughout the performance".

But there's another variable to account for when assessing water consumption: the amount of caffeine you've had.

Watch Your Other Fluids



About Greg Barker



Greg Barker

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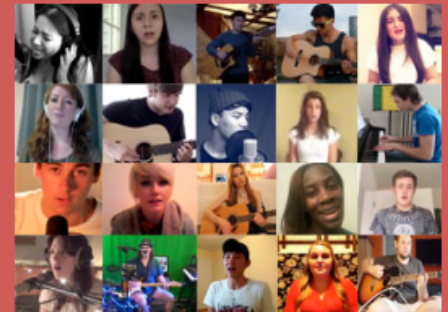
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