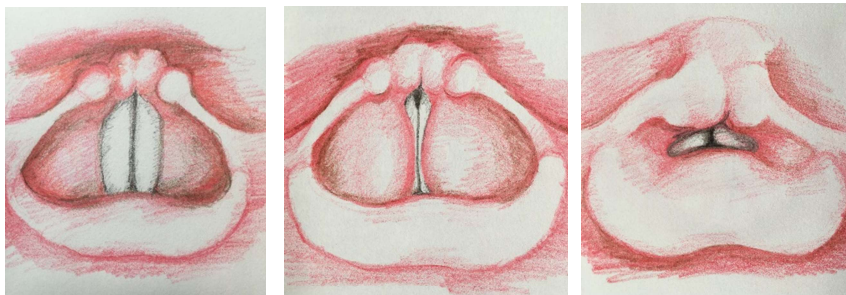


Muscle tension Dysphonia

Muscle Tension Dysphonia (MTD) is a term used to describe voice problems caused by excessive squeezing of the muscles in and around the larynx. It causes the voice to sound hoarse or strained and can cause throat irritation or pain, voice loss and in some cases cause vocal cord nodules or polyps. Diagnosis is by assessment from a speech pathologist and/or ENT, usually via a camera through the nose to look at the voice box while you are speaking.

The vocal cords:



Normal voicing

Sideways squeeze

Front/back squeeze

Causes

Muscle Tension Dysphonia usually develops in response to an underlying problem such as respiratory tract infection, reflux, vocal fold palsy, a gap between the vocal cords or by speaking loudly in noisy environments. Anyone can get Muscle Tension Dysphonia, however it is most common in people who have a high load on their voice and talk loudly. People who are more likely to get vocal cord nodules include singers, teachers, fitness Instructors, Vocal Fold Palsy, children, lawyers, coaches, actors and performers.

Treatment

Muscle tension Dysphonia is effectively treated by a Speech Pathologist with experience in Voice disorders. Treatment consists of a voice assessment which looks at how you produce voice, followed by a series of therapy sessions. Therapy is aimed at changing how you use your voice, to release the tension in and around your larynx and enable you to produce easy, reliable voice. In cases where there is an underlying issue such as reflux, vocal fold cyst or vocal fold palsy, medical or surgical intervention may be required. This would be discussed with your ENT.

Left untreated, long term muscle tension dysphonia may lead to vocal fold nodules or polyps or develop into severe dysphonia and voice loss.