



Stress... & Hoarseness?

by award-winning author and stress-relief expert Susie Mantell

Q: Dear Susie, I would like to know if there could be any relationship between a huge recent increase in my day-to-day stress level, and unexplained hoarseness I've recently developed. It comes on in the afternoon and worsens until bedtime. Could these be related, or is it just coincidence?

A: It's always important to have any persistent physical symptoms evaluated by a physician, so in this case you might start with an E.N.T. (Ear Nose & Throat doctor). While stress may be a factor, it is possible that the hoarseness you've recently developed has a simple cause entirely unrelated to stress and can be easily remedied.

Seasonal allergies, sensitivities to smoke or dust, food and chemical sensitivities, can all cause post-nasal drip and subsequent hoarseness. Other causes can be prolonged muscle tension, open-mouthed breathing, low-grade respiratory infections, vocal fatigue (especially late in the day), vocal cord nodules, medications that cause dryness, and various other conditions.

Day-to-day stress and even a bit of anxiety can be normal bi-products whenever we're going through a challenging time as you are. While I can suggest stress-management tips, what you're describing sounds like you would be best advised by a health care professional who could help evaluate and suggest best approaches. As for possible stress-related contributing factors, hoarseness due to vocal fatigue is very common among people who use their voices in their work for example, teachers, receptionists, performers, coaches, telephone operators, announcers, traders on the stock exchange floor, and wait staff. When people experience ongoing tension, anxiety or pain, or have nasal or sinus congestion, it is not uncommon to unwittingly breathe through an open mouth, causing dryness in the mouth and throat, and lower respiratory system. Living with the frustration of chronic hoarseness brings its own stress, and it sounds like you are going through a difficult time, so please take a look at the dozens of my stress-relief techniques and strategies at <http://www.relaxintuit.com>

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