

➤➤ **DYSPHONIA –What is it?**

The term dysphonia simply means **'difficulty making voice sounds'**
It is not a speech disorder but rather a problem with the larynx/voice box.

When functioning well, the larynx generates voice by using complex and coordinated control of the vocal folds. The folds then vibrate to create sound, as air from the lungs passes across them.

➤➤ **Let's talk about it ...**

Some Causes of Dysphonia

Structural
Nodules
Laryngitis
Haemorrhage
Cysts
Ulcers
Granuloma
Trauma
Polyps
Papilloma
Cancer of the larynx
Neurological
Benign Essential Tremor
Vocal Fold Paresis /Paralysis
Spasmodic Dysphonia AKA Laryngeal Dystonia
Myasthenia Gravis
Multiple Sclerosis
Parkinsons Disease
Functional
Muscle Tension Dysphonia
Puberphonia
Conversion Disorder

Depending on the underlying cause, voice disorders may be managed medically or through vocal retraining with a speech pathologist; or commonly by a combination of both. Other health professionals may also be helpful in improving vocal function.

Dysphonia can also have an impact psychological wellbeing, so it is important to seek support. This may come from a psychologist, counsellor, close family or friend, or from members of the Australian Dysphonia Network who understand what it is like to live with a voice disorder.



CONTACT US

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facebook: follow us Australian Dysphonia Network

or join **'Dysphonia lets talk about it'**

a closed discussion group for people like us.



Why are we here?

The Australian Dysphonia Network Inc, was established in 2016 to support people whose lives are impacted by a voice disorder.

- Voice disorders may affect relationships.
- Voice disorders may change the way we relate to each other.
- Voice disorders may change our ability to participate in broader social circles.
- Voice disorders also have the potential to impact on careers.

Yet, they are poorly diagnosed, and even more poorly understood by the general population.

Together we can change some of that.

We Aim To:

Support: individuals, family and close friends who are affected; to share experiences and support each other.

Educate: the general population, GPs and other health practitioners.

Advocate: for voice disorders to be considered in terms of occupational risks, disability or sickness benefits; and for noise reduction in public spaces, restaurants and cafes in order to reduce voice strain.

Lobby for, and Fund Research: there has been very little local research into the causes, management, or the psycho-social impact of voice disorders. ADN wants to address this.

Who are we here for?

No matter what the 'label' or the underlying cause, life with dysphonia is difficult. We welcome contact from **anyone** who is affected, because regardless of the medical diagnosis, the impacts on daily life will be very similar.

To help a little with understanding the diagnosis part, below is a very brief overview. Information on each of the following conditions will be addressed separately and can be found on our website.



Generally speaking, voice disorders can be classified in the following categories.

Structural: due to a physical abnormality in the larynx. These disorders are sometimes self limiting, or able to be treated and restored to function, with or without residual voice issues.

Neurogenic: can be caused by a variety of central nervous system disorders, or by damage or interference with the nerve that supplies the larynx (RLN, recurrent laryngeal nerve).

Functional: caused by poor muscle functioning, or coordination. Can occur in isolation or as a result of adaptation to physical changes, neurological conditions, faulty technique, or psychological factors.

Psychogenic: Some people experience voice loss as a result of a traumatic experience or other psychological trauma. These conditions can best be managed with appropriate counselling and support.