

Patient information

Posture, tension and stress

The body reacts to stress and worry by increasing muscle tension. Like any other emotion, stress can change the way your voice sounds – if someone is happy, sad, or tired, you will hear it in their voice.

Ways to identify and reduce stress levels are:

1. Pin point things that are worrying you or causing stress – can you change or adapt these things?
2. Talk to a family member, friend or colleague about your problems. If you don't want to talk to someone close to you, a professional counsellor may help.
3. Be aware of how your body responds to stress, e.g. tense shoulders, shallow breathing, worsening voice.

Make a conscious effort throughout the day to think about your posture. A poor posture can increase tension and add to stress.

1. Think about your posture, especially head position.
2. Think about how your neck feels when you wake in the morning – are you sleeping in a good position, do you have enough/too many pillows?
3. At work, or when meeting with friends, or any other occasion where you may have to converse, are you sitting in a posture which enables you to use your breathing well?

Try to spend a few minutes every day to focus on your breathing and to do some form of relaxation. Do this at a time when you are able to **focus** on breathing and relaxation – don't make it something you feel like you quickly need to fit in.

Try to set some time aside for yourself each day in order to unwind.