

HONEY ROSE

VOCALS

Starter Induction Presentation
Vocal Health Starting Points

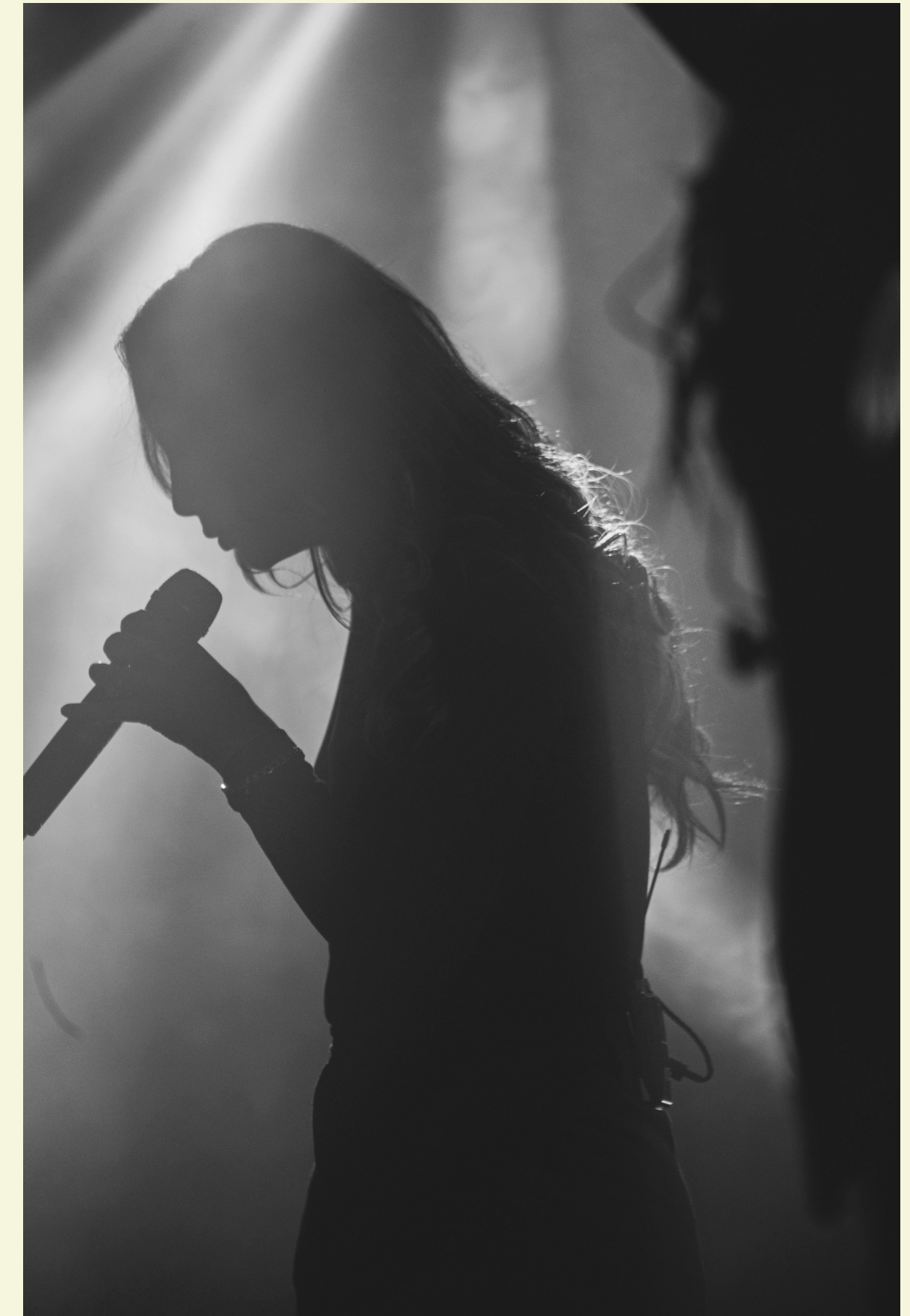


Why is vocal health important for a singer?

Ensuring that you are aware of your body and its functions is imperative knowledge before you start vocal lessons. When we do not understand our voices and how each part of our anatomy works, we risk injury or long-term health conditions which can stop us from singing completely. Your voice cannot be replaced.

Proper and consistent vocal health and upkeep can help singers maintain tone, range and stamina while preventing strain, fatigue or damage (such as vocal nodules or haemorrhages).

The purpose of this lesson is to inform the student about the impact of their health choices and how they can care for their voice to ensure long and sustainable singing careers. Confidence is key, and with practice and professional guidance, you and your voice will grow to be strong and of a professional standard.

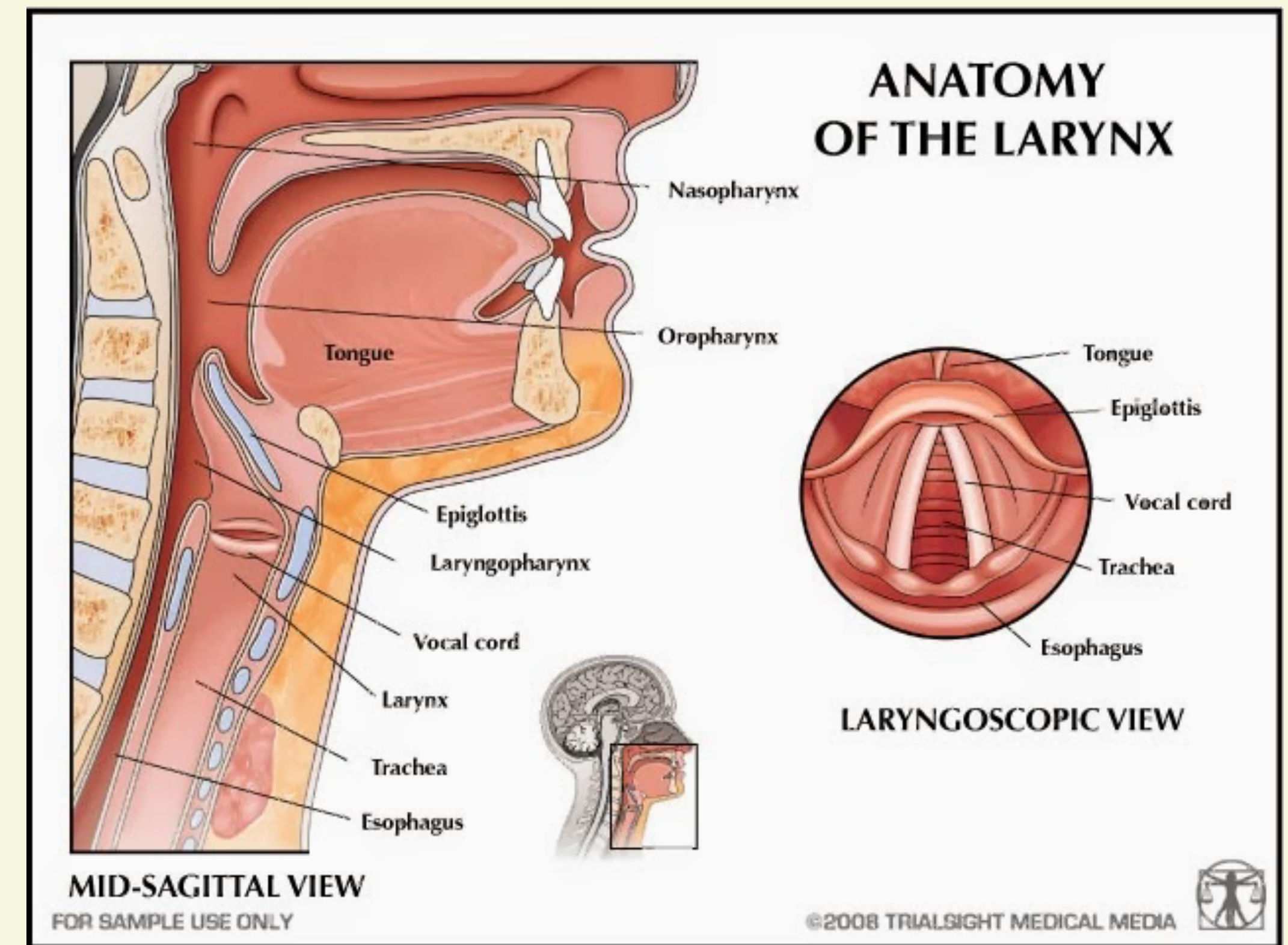


The Larynx:

Understanding the larynx as a singer is essential, as this anatomical structure directly impacts the way our voices sound and act. Unlike any other instrument, the vocal cords cannot be seen by the singer or directly touched when performing. They can only be seen by medical professionals using specialist equipment such as a laryngoscope.

The larynx sits at the top of the trachea (windpipe), the tube made of cartilage that allows air to travel to and from the lungs.

The vocal folds (also called vocal cords) sit inside the larynx. Their biological function is to protect the airway. Their secondary function is phonation (voice production); this is what singers train and rely on. They produce sound through vibration as air passes through.





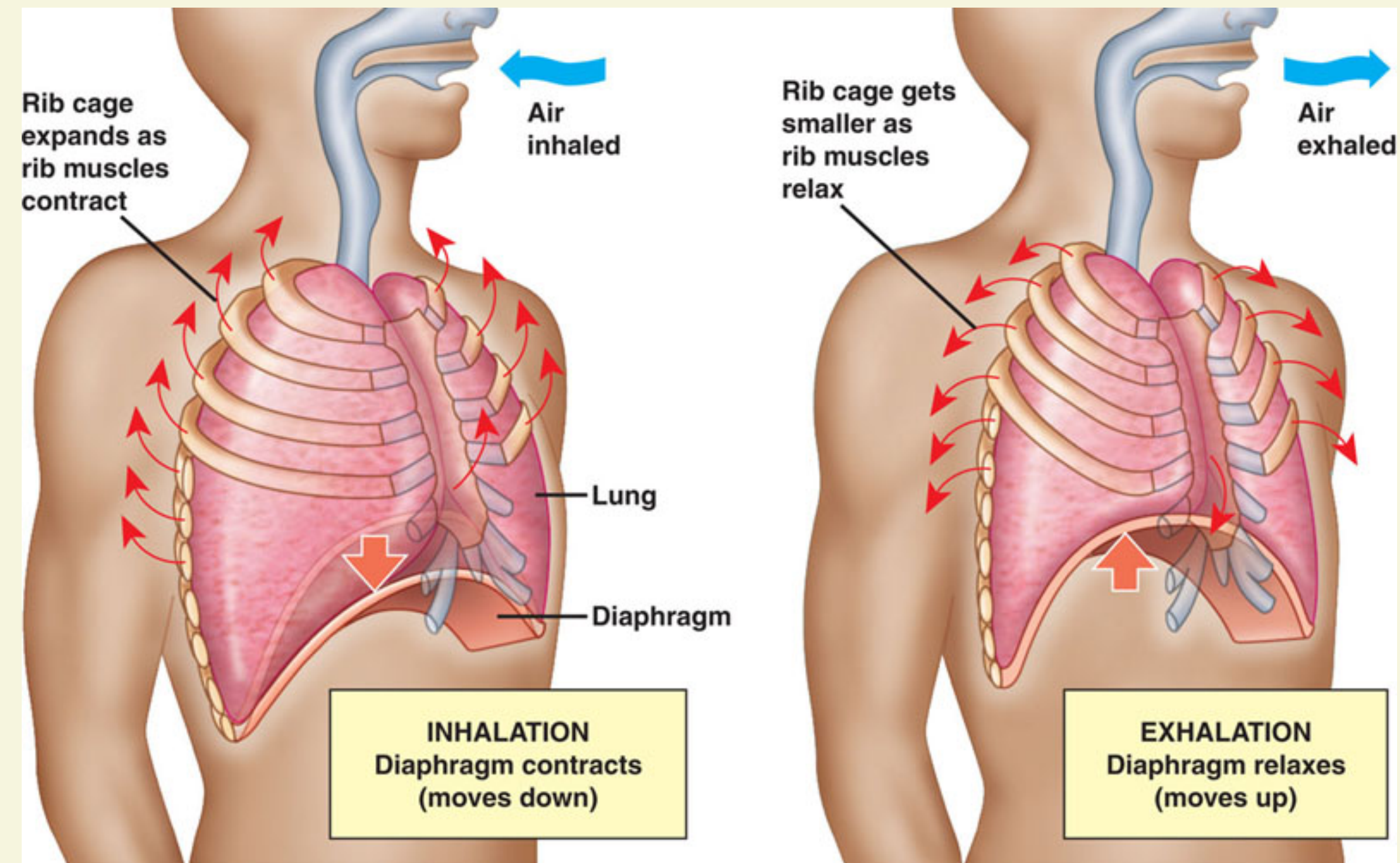
Here are my vocal cords!
These photographs were taken of my vocal cords
using a laryngoscope.



How do we control the sound?

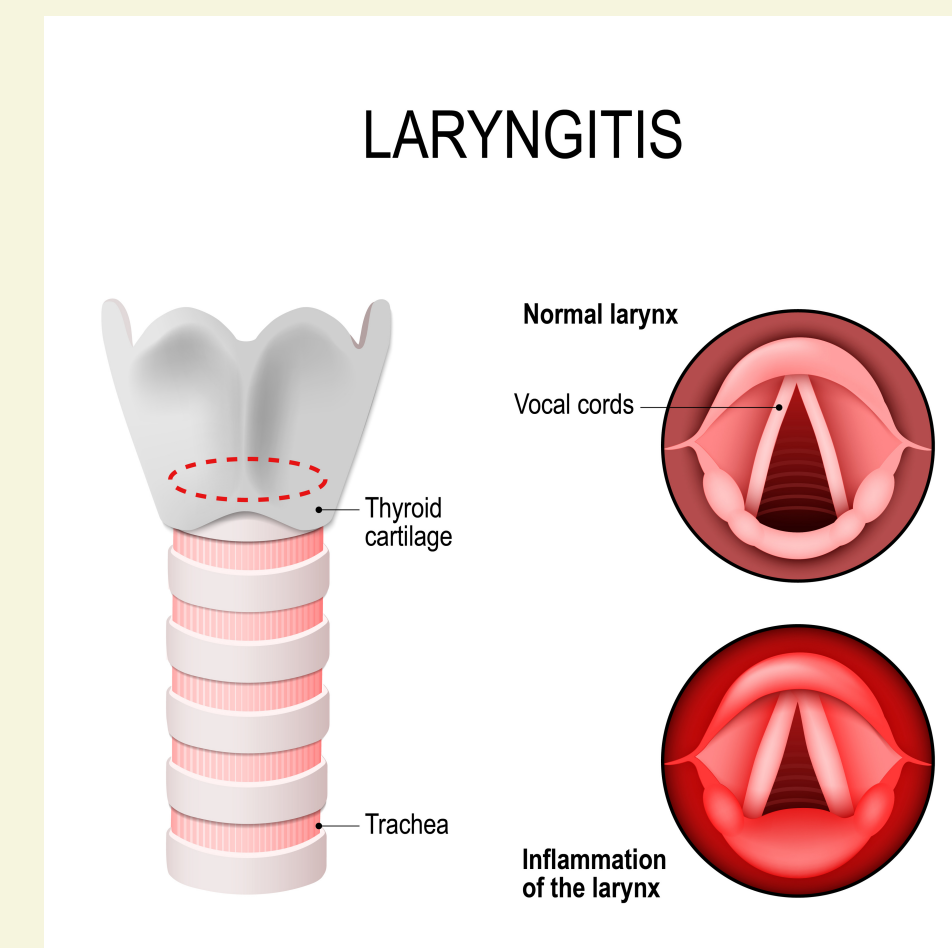
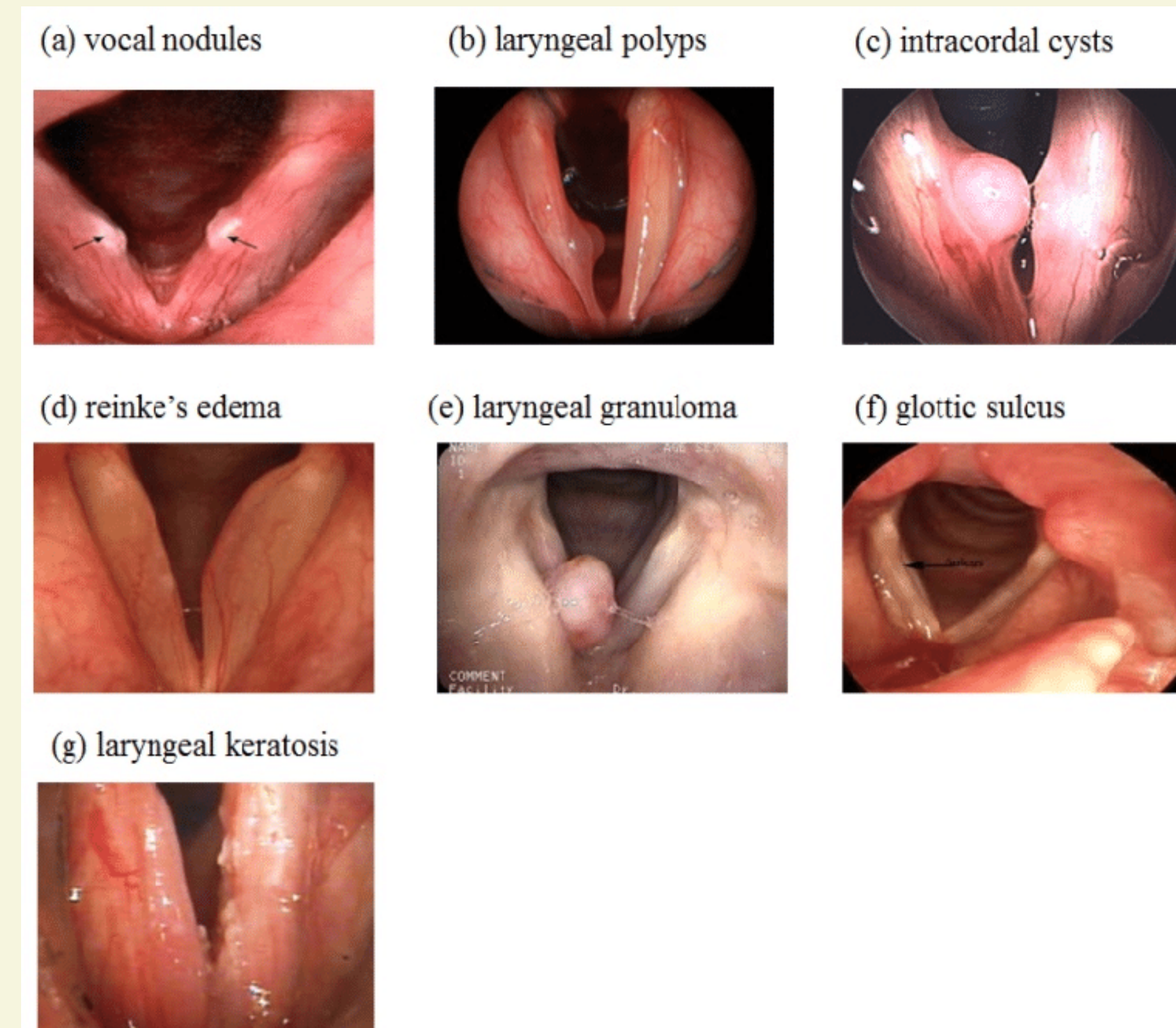
Sound is controlled through the coordinated action of the brain, breath, and muscles in and around the larynx. Air from the lungs creates pressure that causes the vocal folds to vibrate together. Muscles within the larynx adjust the tension, length, and position of the vocal folds to change pitch and tone, which is vital to understand for voice control.

Higher pitch is produced by tightening and lengthening the cords, and lower pitch comes from shortening and thickening the cords. The resulting sound is shaped by the throat, mouth, and nasal cavities to create different vocal tones and speech sounds.



How do we protect our voice?

- Correct posture when singing, avoiding tension around the neck and shoulders.
- Vocal warm-ups and cool down exercises before and after singing!
- Supporting the breath.
- Hydration- avoiding dairy, caffeine and alcohol consumption where possible. Drinking water a couple of hours before a performance ensures that the vocal cords are hydrated and lubricated.
- Vocal rest- overuse of the voice can lead to vocal fatigue and injury.
- Noticing signs of fatigue or injury- when hoarseness, fatigue and/or pain are present when singing, this may be an indicator of strain. This can lead to long-term damage if not correctly fixed.
- Long-term vocal health habits- avoid smoking, shouting, straining, whispering and overuse.



My recommended habits, practices and resources-

- Warming up when you wake up and get ready.
- Honey for strain or vocal injury- while it doesn't directly coat or lubricate the cords, it has soothing antibacterial properties which can help to fight inflammation and infection. If this isn't something that works for you, try mixing a spoonful of honey into some hot water (lemon can be added) for a different sensory experience.
- 'Vocalzone' soothers are of industry standard for vocal health. They help to soothe the voice and can be better than the sugary alternatives.
- Vocal steaming- if illness occurs or the voice feels tired, steaming the voice using a vocal steamer device can be extremely effective for vocal hydration and lubrication. There are many different cost-effective methods, such as a hot bowl of water with a towel over the head, using the shower steam or purchasing a vocal steamer online (usually around the £25 mark).
- See a doctor if signs of vocal injury occur or contact a vocal coach directly for next steps.

