



Flying And The Traveling Voice

Whether you are traveling around the world or just to the next county, the voice is going to be affected by any changes in its environment.

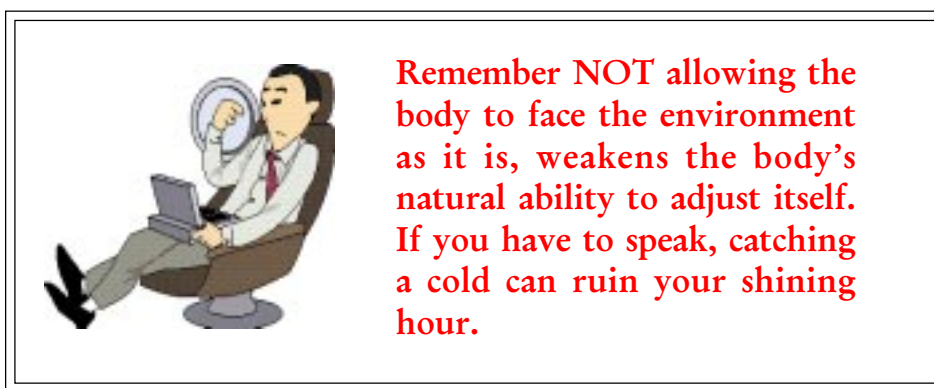
Many of today's jobs involve air travel. Not only is the voice effected by the pressure in the cabin of the airplane, but the voice must also adjust to extreme climate changes. When traveling from the hot, moist east coast to the crisp, dry climate of Denver Colorado to attend a very stressful meeting, you must be prepared for major physical changes in the voice. Just going from climate to climate takes a lot of adjustment in the body, and when stress is an added factor, it decreases the body's natural ability to handle the adjustment. This has a definite impact on the voice. The altitude of "Mile High Denver" affects the delicate muscles of the vocal cords as they try to adjust to a lower density of air. Even your intonation, (the rise and fall of your pitch), can be affected. Who would have thought?

When going from Southern California to Chicago during the winter, most people believe (because their mommie's's told them it was true), that it's best to "bundle up" in the cold weather to avoid catching a cold. Nothing could be further from the truth. (Sorry Mom.) Wearing too many heavy layers of clothing can cause the skin to perspire, making it impossible for its natural climate adjusting process to work. This will open you up to all of those "nasty" germs hanging around just waiting for your defenses to come down and the last thing you want to get off the plane with on your important business trip, is a cold..

The human climate comfort zone is very small indeed. . . (between 76 and 78 degrees, give or take) and we like to carry it with us wherever we go both inside and out. Keeping our bodies in this artificial climate control zone weakens the body's natural ability to adjust itself to the ever change temperature. Between moisture sucking air conditioning in the summer and throat drying heating units in the winter, plus the airplanes cabin pressure, our precious vocal cords don't have a chance to stay healthy and functioning.

Your Preflight Plan

You can begin to strengthen your body's system before you fly, so it can ward off that army of germs catapulting through the air, propelled by every cough and sneeze launched by your fellow passengers. Begin to expand your climate-comfort zone by turning down the heat and air conditioning a few degrees each week, a month before your trip. Allow yourself to feel a little uncomfortable, especially when you are sleeping. This simple exercise will prompt you to take off a few layers of clothing in the airplane and let your skin breathe and adjust to the natural temperature of your body.



Vocal Health and Medications

Any digestive condition will be exaggerated when traveling, due to “on the run” and late night eating and stomach problems are murder on the vocal cords. Stomach acid can move from the stomach up to the throat and irritate the larynx (the housing of your vocal cords), causing a burning irritation and affecting your voice. Reflux laryngitis is common in those who have stomach problems. Do not eat before a performance or presentation, and never swallow anything with caffeine, alcohol or citric acid in it. For any pain while traveling such as backaches from long bus rides, headaches from pressure in the airplane cabin, menstrual cramps etc., take Tylenol, not aspirin. Aspirin thins the blood. If any damage to the vocal cords occurs that causes bleeding, it could be disastrous if you are taking aspirin.



BONUS: For those times when you have no control over the elements, here are some good travel tips...

✍️ Carry with your important stuff a small moisturizer or steamer to transform your nighttime dry air into warm, moist air.

✍️ Always carry water with you on the plane. I know along with “coffee, tea or milk,” you can get water, but it is always chilled. Ice is not what you want for your vocal cords. Besides, the cups are too small and you will annoy the flight attendants by asking them to fill you up one time too many. Stay in control! Bring your own water.

✍️ When climate jumping, wear clothing you can shed easily. Keep your layering light and removable. Be aware when your skin starts to leak. That’s the body’s signal to remove a layer. Pay attention to it. If you perspire easily, you may have to show some restraint. Sitting in the airplane in your undies is not acceptable.

✍️ When traveling by air, avoid lengthy conversations with the person sitting next to you if you are facing a day of voice performance, even if it’s Harrison Ford or Cindy Crawford. Cabin pressure and talking over the drone of the engines tires and weakens the voice.

✍️ If you do happen to find yourself nursing a sore throat the day of your big speech, *DO NOT* use cough drops or throat lozenges with menthol in them. The *coolness* of the menthol is irritating to the delicate membranes of your vocal cords. Herbal drops work great. Better still, have a lemon drop and create your own saliva, the natural healing elixir for the voice.

“Buh...Bye!”



Joni Wilson is an internationally known voice expert, best selling author, speaker/trainer. Her books and CD's are used by business and entertainment professionals because, singing or speaking, her amazing 3-Dimensional Voice Technique brings instant results. She is a media favorite because she has the expertise of a Master Voice Trainer and the wit of a seasoned entertainer. From bedroom to boardroom, your voice alone could keep you from that special job or date. . . Visit Joni's web site @ www.provoicecoach.com or call 1-888-4UVOICE

