



## Aphonia: Causes, Diagnosis, and Management of Voice Loss

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### Description

Aphonia is a voice disorder characterized by the partial or complete loss of voice due to the impairment of vocal fold function. It can occur suddenly or gradually and can have a significant impact on an individual's ability to communicate effectively. A total blockage of the airway is indicated by aphonia. Hoarseness is confined to the larynx and is connected to edoema and malfunction of one vocal cord. A partial airway obstruction at the laryngeal or tracheal level is indicated by stridor, a high-pitched squeaking or crowing sound.

### Organic causes of aphonia

Organic causes of aphonia are related to physical changes or damage to the vocal folds. This can include conditions such as vocal fold nodules, polyps, vocal fold paralysis, vocal fold hemorrhage, laryngeal cancer, and other structural abnormalities. Vocal fold nodules and polyps are benign growths that typically result from vocal abuse or overuse, leading to vocal fold swelling and inflammation. Vocal fold paralysis can be caused by nerve damage or trauma, resulting in a loss of vocal fold movement. Laryngeal cancer is a malignant growth in the larynx that can also cause aphonia.

### Functional causes of aphonia

Functional causes of aphonia are related to the improper use of the vocal folds, often due to vocal misuse or abuse. This can include excessive shouting, yelling, or screaming, prolonged or intense vocal use, or incorrect vocal techniques. Other factors such as stress, anxiety, and psychological issues can also contribute to functional

aphonia. In functional aphonia, there may not be any structural abnormalities in the vocal folds, but the muscles controlling the vocal folds may not be functioning properly, leading to voice loss.

### Diagnosis and management of aphonia

**Diagnosis of aphonia:** Diagnosing the underlying cause of aphonia requires a thorough evaluation by a qualified healthcare professional, typically an otolaryngologist or a speech-language pathologist. The evaluation may include a detailed medical history, a physical examination of the vocal folds using a laryngoscope, and other diagnostic tests such as laryngeal imaging, stroboscopy, and Electromyography (EMG) to assess vocal fold function.

**Management of aphonia:** The management of aphonia depends on the underlying cause and severity of the condition. In cases of organic aphonia, treatment may involve medical or surgical interventions, such as medication for vocal fold inflammation, surgical removal of vocal fold nodules or polyps, or rehabilitation techniques for vocal fold paralysis. In cases of laryngeal cancer, treatment may involve surgery, radiation therapy, or chemotherapy, depending on the stage and location of the cancer.

In cases of functional aphonia, voice therapy and behavioral modification techniques may be recommended to improve vocal hygiene and develop healthy vocal habits. This may involve vocal rest, voice exercises, breathing techniques, and stress management strategies. Speech-language pathologists may also provide counseling and psychological support to address any underlying emotional or psychological factors contributing to functional aphonia.

In some cases, a combination of medical and behavioral interventions may be necessary for effective management of aphonia. It is important to work closely with a healthcare professional to determine the most appropriate treatment plan based on the individual's specific needs.

Aphonia is a voice disorder that can have a significant impact on an individual's ability to communicate. It can be caused by various organic and functional factors, and proper diagnosis and management are essential for effective treatment. Early intervention, including medical and behavioral approaches, can help individuals with aphonia regain their voice and improve their overall quality of life. If you are experiencing voice loss or other vocal symptoms, it is important to seek evaluation and guidance from a qualified healthcare professional to determine the underlying cause and appropriate treatment options.

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