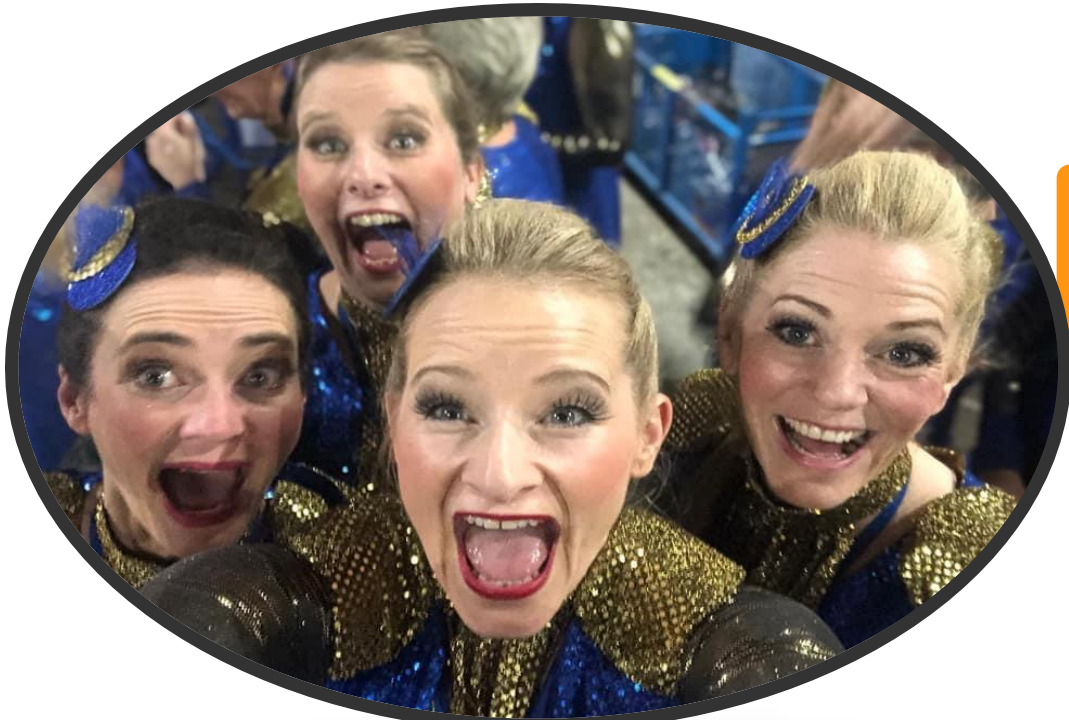


Get your voice  
in tune -  
again!



# How do we get our voices back in shape after a pause or illness?

- Whether you have been ill or not, your voice has been affected by any pause, in one way or another!
- Less singing! If you don't use it, you'll lose it!
- Different ways of singing
- Less speaking
- Different ways of speaking
- Pros 'n cons???

# These factors do affect your voice!

- Physical well-being, stamina
- Mental well-being, anxiety, trauma
- Illnesses, covid, laryngitis, coughing!
- Altered hormone levels
- Using your voice, A LOT, in the wrong way

# Voice therapy exercises – involves the whole body

- Vh, vh, vh (create a smooth v-sound , sway rhythmically from side to side in a ballet position)
- Add a vowel – smooth and lifted
- Pull a heavy rope toward you while saying TRRRRROH!
- Make a rolling rrrrrrr (or bubble) up and down in the register, MOVE – any kind of body movement is ok!
- Flip your tongue ! Flip your tongue and glide up and down with your voice within the register, try to use as much resonance as possible
- Staccato for flexibility: Ki, ko, ki, ko, ki, ko (any notes will do)
- Boh, boh – keep the air in the mouth while gently pushing the larynx down (kind of a nasty feeling, just like before vomiting...)

# “Röstresan” Let’s make a trip, visiting our vocal cords!

- Such a delicate instrument
- Coughing and throat clearing are no-no’s
  - Laughing = voice massage



Use gentle singing exercises! Choose EASY ones, so you can focus to do them with the correct technique! Maybe boring but HEALTHY!!!

- Staccato ex: k---ih-k---eh- ki---owh-owh-owh-owh-owh  
(F-Bb, F-Bb, F-Bb-F-D-Bb)
- Staccato – oh –oh (G-E-G-E-G-E-C)
- Exercises starting with a B consonant, e.g., Bi-bop-bi, any interval (to lower the larynx) e.g. (C-E-G-C-G-E-C)
- Any exercises starting with a V consonant: Vih-owh-vih-owh (involves proper support), (C-E-D-F-E-G-F-A-G-F-E-D-C)
- Put any freeform choreo to ALL exercises – that kinesthetic tool releases tension in your voice, due to the fact that the largest muscle wins



# Straw (tube) phonation



# How to practice with the straw (tube):

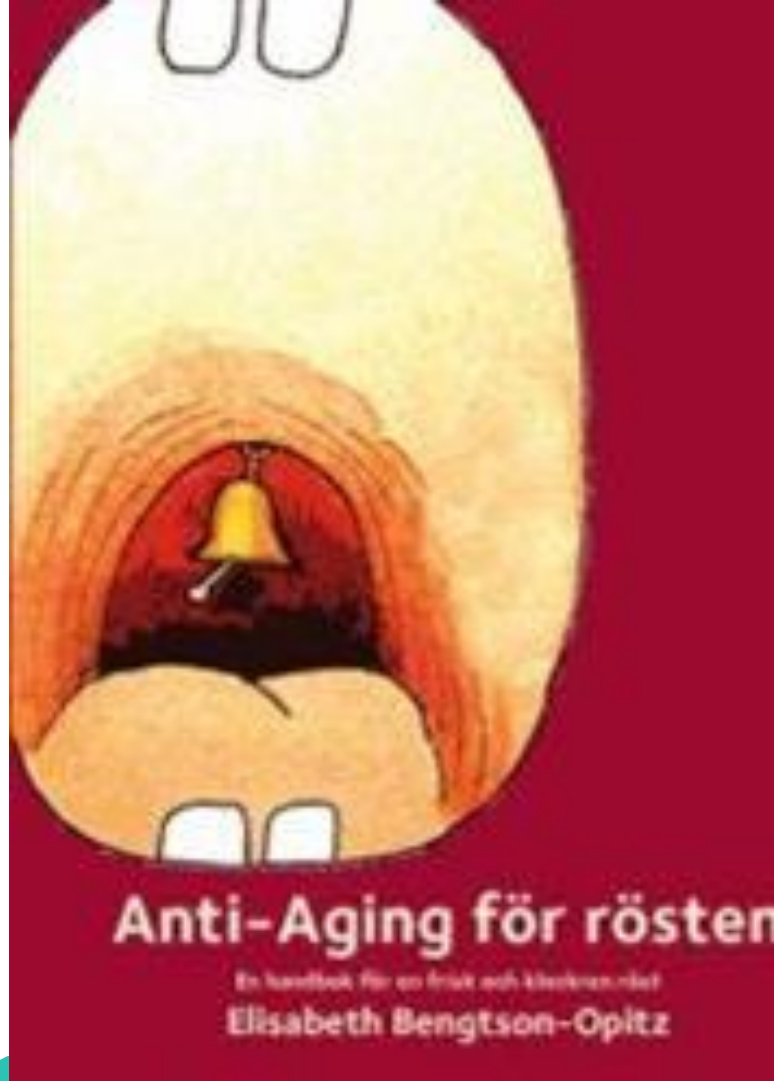
## Recovering from fatigue or illness

- “Bubble” with the straw in a bottle filled with water . Lower the straw 1,5 cm below the surface (no more)
- Totally relaxed cheeks, important to maintain good alignment !
- Soft lips pursed around the straw
- Several times a day and only a couple of minutes each time (2 min)
- Make sure to support the sound, to be free from tension around the larynx

## Building & relaxing exercise

- Soft lips enclose the straw
- Perfect posture, neck is straight
- Make a soft buzzing sound on a note in a comfortable range, for 2 minutes
- Put an accent on the sound
- Glide carefully up and down
- Sing softly a song with limited range using a lot of support





# The aging voice – how to handle it?

# Anti-Aging for the voice

- Keep on singing ! If you don't use it, you'll lose it!
- Stamina, exercise your **WHOLE** body. Build flexibility in "musculus vocalis"
- Use staccato exercises to avoid developing stiffness in the vocal cords
- Straw phonation, successful tool to keep your voice in shape
- Be kind to your voice, always using the correct technique
- Keep warm, drink lukewarm liquids and rest. ("värme, vätska, vila")
- Positive thoughts regarding the aging voice!



It's more amusing to have FUN!



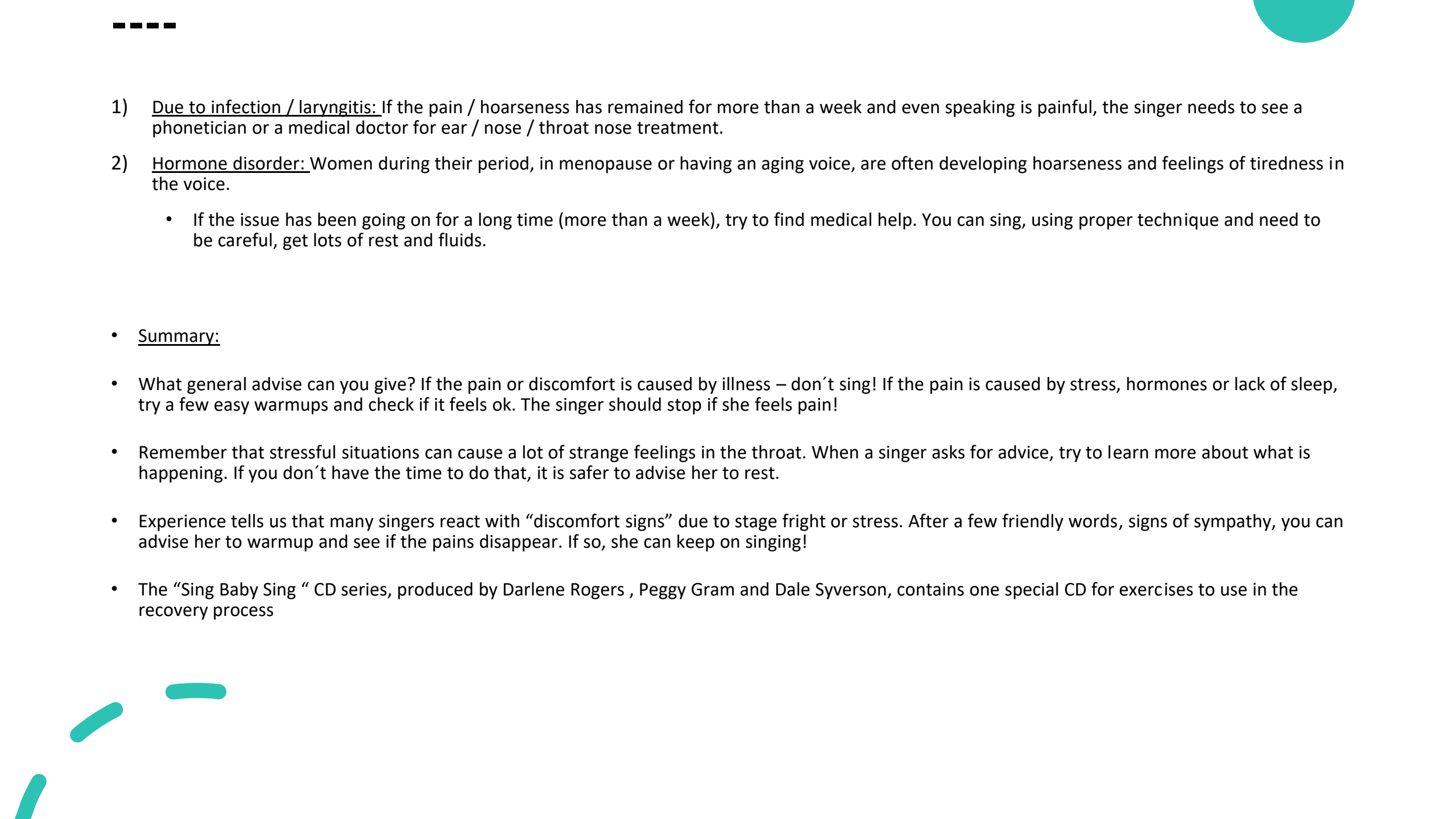
# Vocal distress – information for musical leaders

- As a voice instructor or director, you will probably experience singers asking about different issues regarding their voices. Mostly the questions might be “is it safe to sing?” or “what happens if I sing and feel pain all the time”?
- First, we need to make sure we are aware about that the voice being a delicate instrument, reflecting both the physical and mental status of the singer. It is not unusual that stress, anxiety, fatigue or physical illness is shown in a singers’ voice. Before giving any answers, try asking a few questions to identify the circumstances. I don’t mean to neglect the singers’ question, just that there are many reasons for being hoarse, for example.
- Let’s see if we can separate vocal distress into what is likely clear illness and what could be related to more psychosomatic reasons. Once again, the singer feels what she feels, and it is real to her. Take her seriously – please!
- We need to remind ourselves that our vocal cords consists of “musculus vocalis” which is to say A MUSCLE. The muscle is surrounded by several layers of tissues. When we try to figure out why the singer feels pain or discomfort, we need to sort out if it might be an illness caused by virus or germs, or the muscle has been overly strained and has reacted with pain and swelling.
- Laryngitis – sore throat , hoarseness , showing common signs for a cold.
- Rest your voice, start with soft warm-ups as you feel better. If the throat hurts – STOP. If not, keep using the perfect technique to spare your voice and increase recovery. Should the pain and hoarseness continue, find a doctor specialized in ear/nose/throat or, even better, a voice specialist, used to treat voice illnesses (in Sweden, these specialists are called Phoneticians, what are they called in the US?).
- Practicing straw phonation is very effective, both for recovery and for healing (several demos are to be found at **YouTube**).
- Lost voice. If connected with a sore throat, stay silent and do not whisper. If the voice is coming back or you have, let’s say only the middle range available, do a few soft warmups. If you feel pain, stop and rest. If it feels ok, continue carefully and focus on maintaining the perfect technique. Straw phonation is effective here, too.
- Hoarseness. Often shown due to several reasons. Over usage of the muscle, singing too loud or too long with poor technique, needs to be treated as any other sore muscle: keep warm, drink lukewarm fluids and REST! And learn correct vocal production. If the overuse has been going on for a long time, your vocal cords can react by creating nodules.

# Facts from Wikipedia

- 1) **Vocal cord nodules** are bilaterally symmetrical [benign](#) white masses that form at the midpoint of the [vocal folds](#).<sup>[1]</sup> Although diagnosis involves a [physical examination](#) of the [head](#) and [neck](#), as well as perceptual voice measures, visualization of the vocal nodules via laryngeal [endoscopy](#) remains the primary diagnostic method.<sup>[2][3]</sup> Vocal fold nodules interfere with the vibratory characteristics of the vocal folds by increasing the [mass](#) of the vocal folds and changing the configuration of the vocal fold closure pattern.<sup>[1][2][4]</sup> Due to these changes, the quality of the voice may be affected.<sup>[1]</sup> As such, the major perceptual signs of vocal fold nodules include vocal [hoarseness](#) and breathiness.<sup>[4][5]</sup> Other common symptoms include vocal fatigue, soreness or pain lateral to the [larynx](#), and reduced frequency and intensity range.<sup>[1][4][5]</sup> Airflow levels during speech may also be increased.<sup>[1]</sup> Vocal fold nodules are thought to be the result of vocal fold tissue trauma caused by excessive mechanical stress, including repeated or chronic vocal overuse, abuse, or misuse.<sup>[1][2][5]</sup> Predisposing factors include profession, gender, dehydration, respiratory infection, and other inflammatory factors.<sup>[1][2]</sup>
- For professional voice users as well as individuals who frequently experience [hoarseness](#), vocal hygiene practices are recommended for the prevention of vocal fold nodules and other voice disorders.<sup>[6]</sup> Vocal hygiene practices include three components: regulating the quantity and quality of voice use, improving vocal fold hydration, and reducing behaviours that jeopardize vocal health.<sup>[6]</sup> About 10% of nodules resolve on their own, which is more likely if they are smaller and the onset more recent.<sup>[7]</sup> Treatment of vocal fold nodules usually involves behavioural intervention therapy administered by a [speech-language pathologist](#). In severe cases, [surgery](#) to remove the [lesions](#) is recommended for best [prognosis](#).<sup>[8][9]</sup> In children, vocal fold nodules are more common in males; in adults, they are more common in females.<sup>[10]</sup>



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- 1) Due to infection / laryngitis: If the pain / hoarseness has remained for more than a week and even speaking is painful, the singer needs to see a phonetician or a medical doctor for ear / nose / throat nose treatment.
- 2) Hormone disorder: Women during their period, in menopause or having an aging voice, are often developing hoarseness and feelings of tiredness in the voice.
- If the issue has been going on for a long time (more than a week), try to find medical help. You can sing, using proper technique and need to be careful, get lots of rest and fluids.

- Summary:

- What general advise can you give? If the pain or discomfort is caused by illness – don't sing! If the pain is caused by stress, hormones or lack of sleep, try a few easy warmups and check if it feels ok. The singer should stop if she feels pain!
- Remember that stressful situations can cause a lot of strange feelings in the throat. When a singer asks for advice, try to learn more about what is happening. If you don't have the time to do that, it is safer to advise her to rest.
- Experience tells us that many singers react with "discomfort signs" due to stage fright or stress. After a few friendly words, signs of sympathy, you can advise her to warmup and see if the pains disappear. If so, she can keep on singing!
- The "Sing Baby Sing " CD series, produced by Darlene Rogers , Peggy Gram and Dale Syverson, contains one special CD for exercises to use in the recovery process