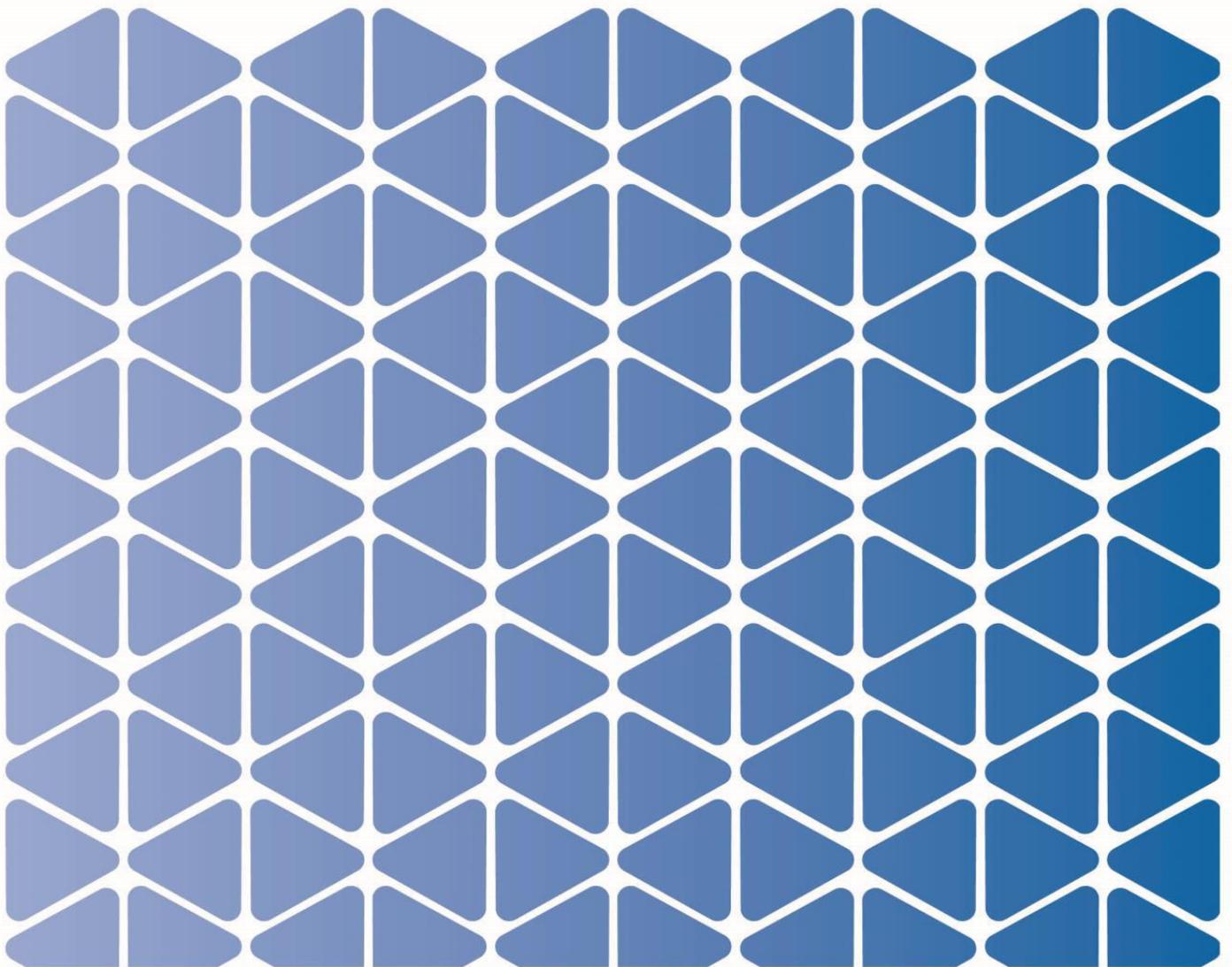




PATIENT INFORMATION

RELEASE OF EXCESS TENSION IN THE VOCAL TRACT



Speech and Language Therapy

Release of Excess Tension in the Vocal Tract

Lips

1.	Lip stretches – smile/purse Holding each position for a count of 5, alternate between a big wide smile and pursed lips, pushing them right forward. Repeat 5 times. Don't clench your jaw or let your neck muscles become tight.
2.	Lip stretches – oo/ee Silently move between the vowel sounds 'oo' and 'ee' as fast as you can using strong lip movements; then try this with voice added.
3.	Lip loosening Blow your lips so that they vibrate (similar to a sound a horse might make). Try making raspberry sounds and loud kissing sounds.

Jaw

4.	Release of jaw joint Let your jaw hang open to a comfortable limit with your tongue tip behind your lower lip. Hold this for at least 60 seconds.
5.	Released jaw in speech Place the tip of your index finger vertically between your upper and lower teeth. Count to 10 out loud and feel the movement of your tongue in your mouth. If this is not uncomfortable for your jaw, repeat the exercise, but with the tips of your index and middle fingers vertically between your teeth for a little more stretch. Try taking the fingers away and counting to 10 again but keeping the same feeling of open jaw posture.
6.	Jaw muscle rub Let your jaw drop slightly. Place the balls of your hands just under your cheekbones and firmly rub down into the hollows of your cheeks at the same time as you let the lower jaw drop into a more open position. Repeat 3 times.
7.	Chewing to release jaw Chew with exaggerated movements of lips and jaw, letting your mouth open as you chew – silently for 30 seconds, and then with voice for 30 seconds.

Tongue

8.	Tongue stretch – protrusion Drop your jaw and protrude your tongue as far as it will go, holding it there for 30 seconds while breathing. You should feel a pull in the base of your tongue. Check you are not tightening your neck muscles – use a mirror, or place a hand on your neck to feel for tension.
9.	Tongue stretch – shapes Stick your tongue out and draw a square with the tip of your tongue. Do this 5 times. Try different shapes – circle, triangle etc.
10.	Tongue release – teeth ‘clean’ Run your tongue all around your mouth to ‘clean’ it – between lips and gums, behind teeth, along the roof and floor of your mouth, even counting your teeth with your tongue. Keep going for 30 seconds.
11.	Tongue base stretch Anchor the tip of your tongue behind your bottom teeth, drop your jaw and push the back of your tongue forwards as far as you can, ensuring the tip stays behind your teeth. Breathe and hold the stretch for as long as possible – at least 10 seconds.
12.	Loosening tongue with voicing With a relaxed jaw, put your tongue out between your lips and count slowly to 10 out loud. Continue with your tongue out and try reciting a nursery rhyme, reading aloud or singing a song. Keep your tongue relaxed and floppy throughout. Return to normal position, then count to 10 again, and try to keep the feeling of relaxed, forward tongue, and space at the back of your mouth.

Throat

13.	Yawn-sigh Keeping your tongue gently touching your lower teeth, make a yawning shape – mouth open wide, soft palate raised, tongue low, stretching and widening at the back of your throat. Sigh your breath out as silently as you can. This may trigger a true yawn, which is also good. Repeat 5 times.
14.	Yawn-sigh with sound Repeat the yawn-sigh exercise, but this time make a gentle sound with your voice as you sigh, sliding down in pitch from high to low. Repeat 5 times.

15.	<p>Closed yawn</p> <p>Try yawning with your lips closed, feeling the space and air contained within your mouth and throat. Repeat 5 times.</p>
16.	<p>Throat smile</p> <p>Smile and then imagine this smile all the way into your throat. Keep breathing and try to feel a sense of widening in your throat as you smile on the inside.</p>
17.	<p>Silent laugh</p> <p>Imagine someone has told you a joke and you are not allowed to laugh out loud. “Laugh” silently and gently inside your throat. There should not be any sound. Then try to maintain this “laughing” posture in your throat and breathe in and out silently.</p>
18.	<p>Silent sigh</p> <p>Take a deep breath in and, without tipping your head back, open your mouth wide and let the air out again completely silently.</p>
19.	<p>Strong sniff</p> <p>Sniff strongly in through your nose, keeping your lips closed, but dropping your jaw and making a yawn shape in the back of your throat as you do so, then breathe out again. Repeat 5 times.</p>

If your symptoms or condition worsens, or if you are concerned about anything, please call your GP, 111, or 999.

Patient Experience

We know that being admitted to hospital can be a difficult and unsettling time for you and your loved ones. If you have any questions or concerns, please do speak with a member of staff on the ward or in the relevant department who will do their best to answer your questions and reassure you.

Feedback

Feedback is really important and useful to us – it can tell us where we are working well and where improvements can be made. There are lots of ways you can share your experience with us including completing our Friends and Family Test – cards are available and can be posted on all wards, departments and clinics at our hospitals. We value your comments and feedback and thank you for taking the time to share this with us.

Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)

If you have any concerns or questions about your care, we advise you to talk with the nurse in charge or the department manager in the first instance as they are best placed to answer any questions or resolve concerns quickly. If the relevant member of staff is unable to help resolve your concern, you can contact the PALS Team. We offer informal help, advice or support about any aspect of hospital services & experiences.

Our PALS team will liaise with the various departments in our hospitals on your behalf, if you feel unable to do so, to resolve your problems and where appropriate refer to outside help.

If you are still unhappy you can contact the Complaints Department, who can investigate your concerns. You can make a complaint orally, electronically or in writing and we can advise and guide you through the complaints procedure.

How to contact PALS:

Telephone Patient Services: 0300 123 1732 or via email at: wah-tr.PET@nhs.net

Opening times:

The PALS telephone lines are open Monday to Thursday from 8.30am to 4.30pm and Friday: 8.30am to 4.00pm. Please be aware that a voicemail service is in use at busy times, but messages will be returned as quickly as possible.

If you are unable to understand this leaflet, please communicate with a member of staff.