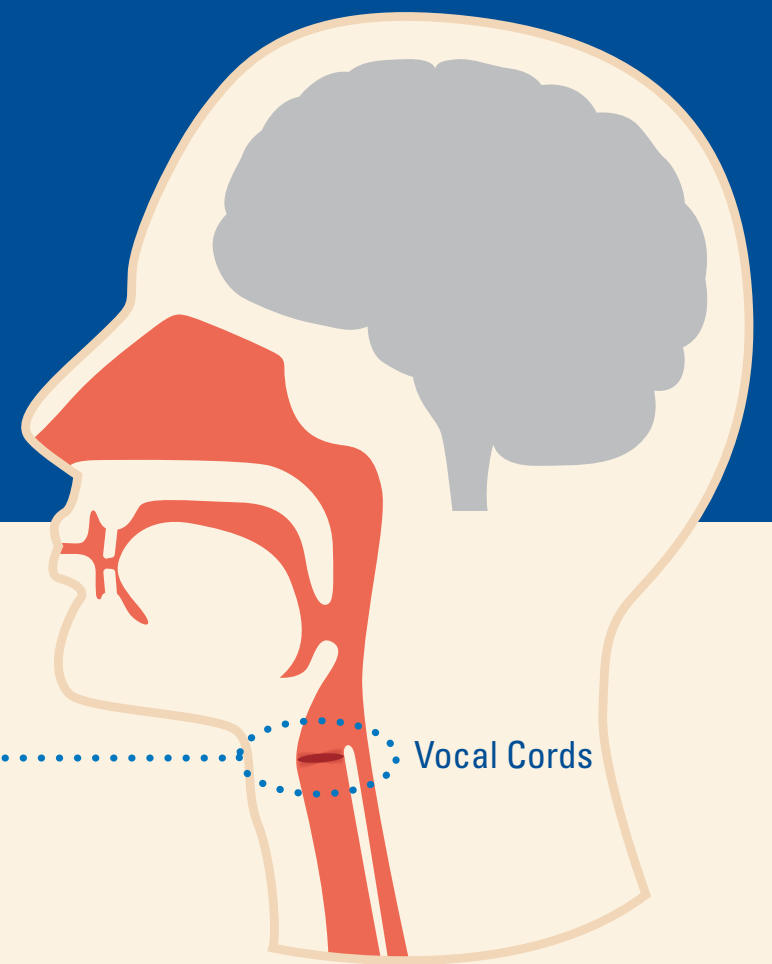


UNDERSTANDING VOCAL CORD DYSFUNCTION

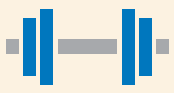


What is Vocal Cord Dysfunction?

Vocal cord dysfunction (VCD) is an **abnormal narrowing of the larynx**. VCD occurs in some people during high intensity exercise or exposure to certain irritants. This narrowing leaves only a small opening for air to flow through the windpipe, which can feel like you can't get enough air into your lungs. VCD can cause symptoms that mimic asthma.

Causes

The top three triggers that cause VCD are:



Exercise



Postnasal drip



Reflux

What are Vocal Cords?

Vocal cords are folds of tissue in the larynx (voice box) at the top of the trachea (windpipe). They protect the airway when you cough and clear your throat.

Vocal cords open during breathing, close during swallowing, and vibrate for speaking, singing and making sounds.

Symptoms



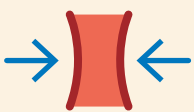
Shortness of breath



Intermittent hoarseness or wheezing



Chronic cough and/or throat clearing



Chest and/or throat tightness



Trouble getting air in

Treatment



Speech therapy

- Breathing techniques
- Cough suppression
- Throat-clearing techniques
- Voice therapy



Treating other symptoms

- Allergies
- Infection
- Reflux
- Other health conditions

Diagnosis



A **respiratory doctor** will evaluate your breathing and determine what things make your symptoms worse.

Management



- Follow your treatment plan.
- Use breathing and throat-clearing techniques.
- Stay active.