

# Lip trills exercises

## A patient's advice sheet

These exercises are for patients with voice problems and should help to achieve smooth voicing by encouraging the mouth and throat to be relaxed. This leaflet explains why these exercises are needed and how to perform them.

### Why do I need these exercises?

Lip trilling aims to:

- Release tension in the lips and mouth.
- Prevent vocal tension and strain when voicing.
- Improve breath support and control.
- Improve pitch range without straining the voice.

### How do I carry out these exercises?

Before you begin, ensure that you sit in a comfortable position and avoid slouching. If you prefer, you can stand up with your feet slightly apart with your weight evenly balanced. Remain relaxed and use the breathing technique you have been taught.

- Begin by breathing in through your nose and out through your mouth silently. Do this until you feel that a smooth rhythm has been established.
- Breathe in through your nose and when you breathe out vibrate your lips together as if you were blowing bubbles underwater. At this point your lips should be making a noise but you should not be using your vocal folds (voicing). Hold it for as long as it feels relaxed and comfortable. Stop before you run out of breath and stop if you feel any discomfort or tension. Repeat the lip trill 10 times.
- Do not try to lip trill with pursed lips. Your lips should be relaxed and vibrating freely. If you are unable to do this, place one finger from each hand on your face either side of your lips. Gently push your cheeks so that your lips make a slight pout.

Once you have practised the gentle 'voiceless' trills on their own and feel comfortable with them, try:

A. Adding some 'sound' or 'voice' into the trill  
Breathe in through your nose and when you breathe out vibrate your lips together with some sound, like a telephone ringing. Choose a pitch that is comfortable for you. Keep the pitch at the same tone and do not vary it by going higher or lower.

'brrrrrrrrrrrrrrrr'

Repeat this 10 times and stop if you run out of breath or if you feel any discomfort or tension.

B. Changing the pitch of the trill  
Start making a voiced trill at a low pitch and gently glide into a high pitch.

'brrrrrrrrrrrrrrrr'

Then start making a voiced trill at a high pitch and gently glide into a low pitch.

'brrrrrrrrrrrrrrrr'

Repeat these 10 times.

C. Adding vowel sounds onto the end of the trill  
Make a 'voiced' lip trill as above and add the following vowel sounds to the end of the trill. Choose a pitch that is comfortable for you. Keep the pitch at the same tone.

brrrrrr - ahh brrrrrr - ee

brrrrrr - eye brrrrrr - ayy

brrrrrr - oar brrrrrr - ee

D. Adding words onto the end of the trill

Make a 'voiced' lip trill as above and add the following syllables to the end of the trill. Choose a pitch which is comfortable for you. Keep the pitch at the same tone.

brrrrrr - ine brrrrrr - awn

brrrrrr - ain brrrrrr - ight

brrrrrr - eeze brrrrrr - own

brrrrrr - and brrrrrr - aid

brrrrrr - oom brrrrrr - ush

### When should I do these exercises?

Lip trills are a simple way to relax your vocal muscles, so it can be useful to practise these exercises in the morning, before lunch, or when you feel your voice quality may be getting weaker.

It is best to carry out these exercises for short periods of time, on a regular basis as it will have more of a positive effect on your voice. A good target would be to practise the lip trill exercises three to five times a day for up to five minutes each time.

If you have any questions, please contact Speech and Language Therapy on 01223 638732