



## Functional Voice Disorders

Functional Voice Disorders (FVDs) are voice disorders that are characterized as dysphonia in the setting of normal vocal fold anatomy and movement. This group of voice disorders may originate from psychological or idiopathic causes. FVDs are classified as psychogenic voice disorders (PVDs), or muscle tension disorders (MTD).

### Anatomy and Physiology

- PVD indicates the primary process has a psychological origin. FVD, particularly PVD, indicates the existence of one or more psychological disorders in the setting of dysphonia and normal laryngeal exam. These include:
  - Affective (depression/or anxiety) disorder
  - Conversion disorder
  - Personality disorder
- MTD may have various etiologies, including poor voice technique, significant vocal demands as well as psychological factors. This is discussed further in the Muscle Tension Dysphonia section.
  - D. Rosen, R. Sataloff: Psychological aspects of voice disorders. R. Sataloff (Ed.), Vocal Health and Pedagogy, Singular Publishing Group, San Diego, CA (1997), pp. 243-255

### Assessment

- Diagnosis is contingent upon history, laryngoscopic examination, perceptual acoustic assessment, voice-related musculoskeletal features and psychological evaluations.
- PVD is classified as dysphonia with no organic etiology on laryngoscopic examination. MTD findings are discussed further in the Muscle Tension Dysphonia section.
  - Morrison MD, Nichol H, Rammage LA. Diagnostic criteria in functional dysphonia. *Laryngoscope* 1986;96:1-8

### Pathophysiology



- FVDs are thought to have a psychological basis in the setting of PVD, however MTD is associated with vocal misuse/abuse as well as patients compensating for other underlying laryngeal pathology.
  - Andrea M, Dias Ó, Andrea M, Figueira ML. Functional Voice Disorders: The Importance of the Psychologist in Clinical Voice Assessment. *Journal of Voice*. 2017 Jul 1;31(4):507-e13.

### Treatment

- Voice therapy as is the gold standard of treatment of functional voice disorders. Treatment may be completed in conjunction with a psychologist if indicated.
  - Andrea M, Dias Ó, Andrea M, Figueira ML. Functional Voice Disorders: The Importance of the Psychologist in Clinical Voice Assessment. *Journal of Voice*. 2017 Jul 1;31(4):507-e13