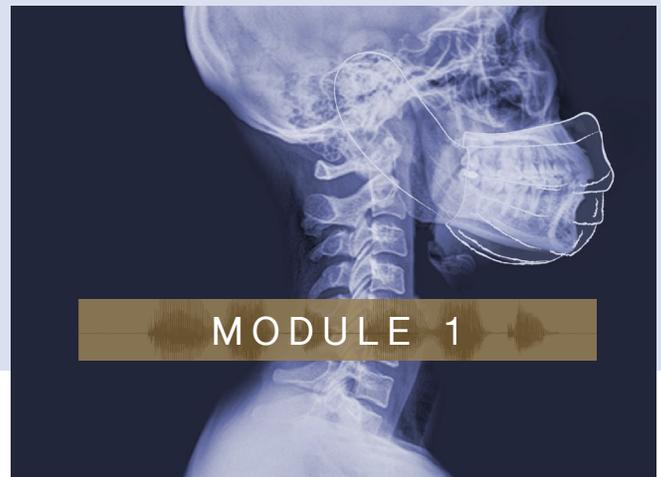


Impact of Masks on Communication

TRANSCRIPT



TIME (MM:SS)

TRANSCRIPT

00:00

Narrator: Welcome to the Impact of Masks on Communication module, the first educational module in the Masks and Vocal Health: One Voice at a Time series.

00:10

During this module, you will learn how COVID-19 is transmitted between people and how wearing face masks and coverings reduce the risk of COVID transmission during speech. We will discuss how masks impact speech, voice, and communication.

00:27

COVID-19 is a virus that is found in the respiratory tract and airways. It is spread through droplets during coughing and sneezing. It can also be spread through the air by way of aerosols. Speaking and heavy breathing can create aerosols that leave the body through the nose and the mouth.

00:46

Here is an example of someone speaking with and without a mask. Face coverings are one way to reduce the transmission of COVID-19 by stopping or slowing down the droplets and aerosols during speech. It is important that the mask covers both the mouth and the nose.

01:07

Here, we have an example of someone breathing through their nose. As you can see, droplets and aerosols can travel out of the nose as well.

01:16

A mask that is well fit over your nose and mouth, in addition with social distancing, can reduce the transmission of COVID-19.

01:25

However, masks impact our ability to communicate with one another.

01:30

When wearing a mask, there is a loss of visual information as your communication partner can no longer see your facial expressions or lips to lipread. This can be especially difficult when talking in a loud environment or when talking to someone with hearing loss.

01:48

Masks also impact your speech sounds. Because masks act as a barrier to airflow, they make your speech sound muffled. This can be especially difficult for sounds that are similar to one another.

02:10

Here I am speaking with and without a mask. Let's listen: Sip, ship, sew, show, sell, shell. You'll have to show that. You'll have to sew that. The pig is sick. The pig is thick.

02:34

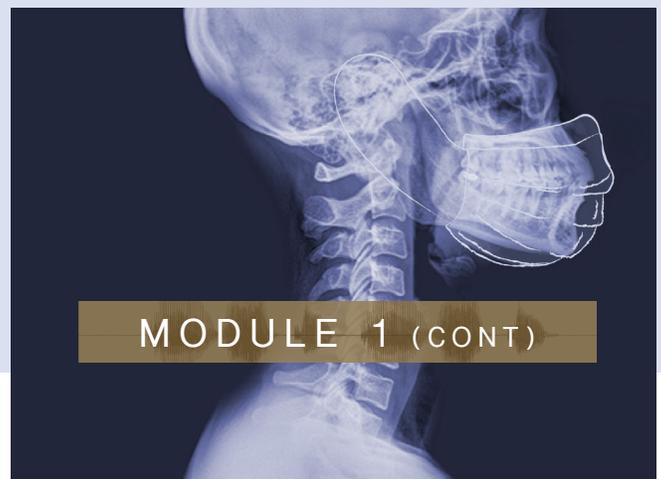
Sip, ship, sew, show, sell, shell. You'll have to show that. You'll have to sew that. The pig is sick. The pig is thick.

02:49

Our research has shown that masks impact your ability to make sounds. We found that masks significantly reduce the ability to articulate sounds in your mouth. We think that is because masks restrict the amount of lip, jaw, and tongue movement. This can then be perceived as and referred to as mumbling.

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TIME
(MM:SS)

TRANSCRIPT

03:10

Aside from these communication problems, workers required to wear masks throughout the workday also report an increase in vocal effort. This means that they have to push harder to make a voice and to be heard. Increased vocal effort can contribute to a feeling of vocal fatigue, defined as tiredness or a weak voice after talking. Vocal fatigue has many signs, but some signs of fatigue are hoarseness, throat pain or discomfort, tension in the throat neck and shoulders, running out of air while talking, and feeling like you need to clear your throat more frequently. Importantly, vocal fatigue may resolve itself if you take a break from talking.

04:00

In summary, there are many communication challenges when wearing a face mask. These include: a loss of visual information as listeners can no longer see your lips and face, a reduction in sound clarity referred to as muffling, a reduction in sound articulation referred to as mumbling, and an increase in effort and vocal fatigue.

04:27

With these challenges, many mask-wearing community members find themselves removing their masks to help improve their communication. However, it is important to remember that mask removal increases the likelihood of COVID-19 transmission through droplets and aerosols. In order to continue to protect yourself and others, wearing a mask is essential.

04:52

Our next module will help you to identify if you are having a problem with your voice and provide important tips and tricks to improve your voice and communication while wearing a mask.

05:05

Protecting yourself and your community, one voice at a time.