

## Facial massage and warm up exercises

### Neck and Shoulders

- Lift and drop the shoulders, a bit more than a shrug but neither a violent nor wrenching action.
- Lift them up to your ears and then try shifting them in various positions before dropping them down again (as you drop them, try not to predict their final position of rest, simply let them fall until they naturally want to stop)
- Notice whether your shoulders move equally or whether one is higher than, tenser than or stiffer than the other
- Now circle the shoulders in all directions. Don't use force, allow the shoulder sockets to guide the movement rather than forcing them with the arms. Don't be alarmed if they make a crunching sound, this is normal
- Now swing your arms in turn, in the direction of an underarm throw, letting the weight of the arm release the shoulder. Keep the swing fluid and do not force the shoulder to move more than is comfortable
- Once you have done this a few times with both arms, change the direction
- Then windmill the arms so that they are moving in opposite direction to each other. Then swap so that them move in the other direction, still windmilling together
- Cross your arms in front of you and use your hands to massage your neck and shoulder muscles
- Now raise your arms straight up high and stretch the whole body up with them, try not to raise the shoulders up to your ears, just the arms and feel the stretch going all the way through to your finger tips
- Let your arms come to a natural rest
- Drop your head down onto your chest and begin to roll it side to side gently and slowly, increasing the extent of the roll higher each time until you can comfortable complete a full circle head roll. Be very gentle and don't force this at any stage
- Try rotating your head and shoulders simultaneously in one continuous, gentle action.
- Then rest

### Face and Jaw

- Gently massage your face all over.
- Try to move all of your facial muscles - as many as you can experience - independently e.g. first try moving your cheeks, then mouth, lips, ears, nose, eyes, brow etc concentrate on both sides together and then each side individually. See how many movements you can make
- Stretch the mouth open wide, then release it. Repeat a few times
- Circle the jaw in a continuous chewing motion, opening as wide as is comfortable. Don't force it and be prepared for some crackling sounds, so go gently and observe where there may be some tension
- Stretch the tongue in and out. Go gently at first and gradually try to extend it without overdoing it. Try and touch your nose with your tongue, then your chin.

## Vocal warm up

- Inhale slowly on a yawn. Feel the air in the back of your throat. Keep your jaw hanging relaxed and your tongue relaxed on the floor of your mouth. Make sure your shoulders are low and relaxed. Exhale slowly. Keep your head and shoulders still but relaxed, not stiff. Repeat the inhaled yawn – vocalise as you exhale. Repeat again and vary the pitch as you vocalise. Repeat again, and count from 1 to 5 as you exhale, varying the pitch as you count.
- Then after inhaling slowly on a yawn again, produce a gentle "hmmmm" on an exhalation at a pitch that is comfortably positioned in the lower range. Repeat and change the hmm to "ahhh" halfway through the exhaled breath. Try to change nothing but the opening of the mouth. Maintain the same facial buzz with the "ahh" that was achieved with the hmmm.
- Change to a 'v' sound and see if you can make your lower lip itch. Again move up and down in pitch and observe the different
- Change to a 'w' sound - see if you can feel vibrations in your cheeks and again try different pitches
- Change to a voiced 'th' sound as in 'the' and see if you can make your tongue itch. Try different pitches
- Put your lips together and try to roll a 'b' like a helicopter sound so that your lips are vibrating. Again try moving up and down in pitch
- Move through the vowel sounds with a big open mouth - a e i o u. Then add consonant sounds to the beginning of the vowel e.g. bay, bee, by, bo, boo, fay, fee, fi, fo, foo.
- Make a 'ha' sound and try to push all the air out of your lungs quickly when you do so. Take a deep breath and repeat 3 times then relax. Then repeat but this time allowing the 'ha' sound to be gentle and elongated and see how long you can maintain the sound as you gently release all the air in your lungs. Again repeat 3 times and relax.

