

Health and Safety Policy

Texas Wesleyan University Department of Music

The Department of Music at Texas Wesleyan University, as required by the National Association of Schools of Music, is obligated to inform students and faculty of health and safety issues, hazards, and procedures inherent in practice, performance, teaching, and listening both in general and as applicable to their specific specializations. This includes but is not limited to information regarding hearing, vocal and musculoskeletal health, injury prevention, and the use, proper handling, and operation of potentially dangerous materials, equipment, and technology. The Department of Music will communicate basic information regarding common health and safety issues related to the performance and practice of music and recommended preventive measures to its constituents through a variety of methods.

In recognition of the significant impact of health and safety issues on the lives and academic activities of its faculty, staff, and students The Department of Music at Texas Wesleyan University strives to provide a safe and healthy environment for music study. Individuals are personally responsible for avoiding risk and preventing injuries to themselves before, during, and after study or employment in the Department of Music. The policies, protocols, and operational procedures developed by the department do not alter or cancel any individual's personal responsibility to make responsible personal decisions. They serve only to better educate and inform the students and faculty of the Department of Music.

Performance Related Injuries

Anyone who practices, rehearses or performs instrumental or vocal music has the potential to suffer injury related to that activity. Instrumental musicians are at risk for repetitive motion injuries. Instrumental injuries often include carpal tunnel syndrome, tendinitis, and bursitis. Incorrect posture, non-ergonomic technique, excessive force, overuse, stress, and insufficient rest contribute to chronic injuries that can cause pain, disability, and hamper future careers in music.

Protecting Your Neuromusculoskeletal Health

An NASM (National Association of Schools of Music) – PAMA Student Information Sheet

- Neuromusculoskeletal health is essential to your lifelong success as a musician.
- Practicing and performing music is physically demanding.
- Musicians are susceptible to numerous neuromusculoskeletal disorders.
- Some musculoskeletal disorders are related to behavior; others are genetic; still others are the

result of trauma or injury. Some genetic conditions can increase a person's risk of developing certain behavior- related neuromusculoskeletal disorders.

- Many neuromusculoskeletal disorders and conditions are preventable and/or treatable.
- Sufficient physical and musical warm-up time is important.
- Good posture and correct physical technique are essential.
- Regular breaks during practice and rehearsal are vital in order to prevent undue physical stress and strain.
- It is important to set a reasonable limit on the amount of time that you will practice in a day.
- Avoid sudden increases in practice times.
- Know your body and its limits, and avoid "overdoing it."
- Maintain healthy habits. Safeguard your physical and mental health.
- Day-to-day decisions can impact your neuromusculoskeletal health, both now and in the future. Since muscle and joint strains and a myriad of other injuries can occur in and out of school, you also need to learn more and take care of your own neuromusculoskeletal health on a daily basis, particularly with regard to your performing medium and area of specialization.
- If you are concerned about your personal neuromusculoskeletal health, talk with a medical professional.
- If you are concerned about your neuromusculoskeletal health in relationship to your program of study, consult the appropriate contact person at your institution.
- This information is provided by the National Association of Schools of Music (NASM) and the Performing Arts Medicine Association (PAMA). For more information, check out the other NASM- PAMA neuromusculoskeletal health documents, located on the NASM website nasm.arts-accredit.org.

Protecting Your Vocal Health An NASM – PAMA Student Information Sheet

- Vocal health is important for all musicians and essential to lifelong success for singers.

- Understanding basic care of the voice is essential for musicians who speak, sing, and rehearse or teach others.
- Practicing, rehearsing, and performing music is physically demanding.
- Musicians are susceptible to numerous vocal disorders.
- Many vocal disorders and conditions are preventable and/or treatable.
- Sufficient warm-up time is important.
- Begin warming up mid-range, and then slowly work outward to vocal pitch extremes.
- Good posture, adequate breath support, and correct physical technique are essential.
- Regular breaks during practice and rehearsal are vital in order to prevent undue physical or vocal stress and strain.
- It is important to set a reasonable limit on the amount of time that you will practice in a day.
- Avoid sudden increases in practice times.
- Know your voice and its limits, and avoid overdoing it or misusing it.
- Maintain healthy habits. Safeguard your physical and mental health.
- Drink plenty of water in order to keep your vocal folds adequately lubricated. Limit your use of alcohol, and avoid smoking.
- Day-to-day decisions can impact your vocal health, both now and in the future. Since vocal strain and a myriad of other injuries can occur in and out of school, you also need to learn more and take care of your own vocal health on a daily basis. Avoid shouting, screaming, or other strenuous vocal use.
- If you are concerned about your personal vocal health, talk with a medical professional.
- If you are concerned about your vocal health in relationship to your program of study, consult the appropriate contact person at your institution.
- This information is provided by the National Association of Schools of Music (NASM) and the Performing Arts Medicine Association (PAMA). For more information, check out the other NASM- PAMA neuromusculoskeletal health documents, located on the NASM website nasm.arts-accredit.org.

NASM Bulletin on Protecting Your Hearing

Student Information Sheet on Noise-Induced Hearing Loss

National Association of Schools of Music

Performing Arts Medicine Association

- Hearing health is essential to your lifelong success as a musician.
- Your hearing can be permanently damaged by loud sounds, including music. Technically, this is called Noise-Induced Hearing Loss (NIHL). Such danger is constant.

- Noise-induced hearing loss is generally preventable. You must avoid overexposure to loud sounds, especially for long periods of time.
- The closer you are to the source of a loud sound, the greater the risk of damage to your hearing mechanisms.
- Sounds over 85 dB (your typical vacuum cleaner) in intensity pose the greatest risk to your hearing.
- Risk of hearing loss is based on a combination of sound or loudness intensity and duration.
- Recommended maximum daily exposure times (NIOSH) to sounds at or above 85 dB are as follows:
 - 85 dB (vacuum cleaner, MP3 player at 1/3 volume) – 8 hours
 - 90 dB (blender, hair dryer) – 2 hours
 - 94 dB (MP3 player at ½ volume) – 1 hour
 - 100 dB (MP3 player at full volume, lawnmower) – 15 minutes
 - 110 dB (rock concert, power tools) – 2 minutes
 - 120 dB (jet planes at take-off) – without ear protection, sound damage is almost immediate
- Certain behaviors (controlling volume levels in practice and rehearsal, avoiding noisy environments, turning down the volume) reduce your risk of hearing loss. Be mindful of those MP3 earbuds. See chart above.
- The use of earplugs and earmuffs helps to protect your hearing health.
- Day to day decisions can impact your hearing health, both now and in the future. Since sound exposure occurs in and out of school, you also need to learn more and take care of your own hearing health on a daily, even hourly basis.
- It is important to follow basic hearing health guidelines.
- It is also important to study this issue and learn more.
- If you are concerned about your personal hearing health, talk with a medical professional.
- If you are concerned about your hearing health in relationship to your program of study, consult the appropriate contact person at your institution.
- This information is provided by the National Association of Schools of Music (NASM) and the Performing Arts Medicine Association (PAMA). For more information, check out the other NASM-PAMA hearing health documents, located on the NASM Web site at the URL linked below.

<https://nasm.arts-accredit.org/publications/brochures-advisories/nasm-pama-hearing-health/>