

Practical advice and practice techniques for use with your Electrolarynx (EL) to improve speech and gain confidence through practice and repetition.

Use your electrolarynx (EL), sometimes called an artificial larynx (AL), as your primary way of communicating, as a backup method, or temporarily. It can also be used as a way to be heard over the noise of a crowd.



### ARTICULATION (How clear is your voice)

You shape sounds into speech using your lips, teeth, roof of your mouth, and tongue.

- ▶ **PRACTICE** mouthing words silently without using the EL.
- ▶ **PRACTICE** saying the following sounds silently:



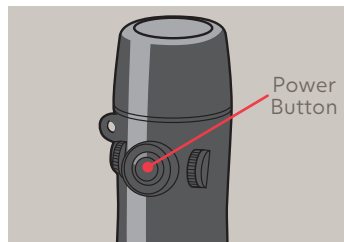
- ▶ **MOUTH** the phrase:

"I'd like a cup of coffee."

- ▶ **REPEAT** the above phrase now with your EL, press the power button when you start talking.
- ▶ **OVER-EXAGGERATE** the movements of your tongue, teeth, and lips so that you can be understood better.

### TIMING

- ▶ **PRESS** the power button only while you are talking. Release the power button so there is no excess buzzing during pauses.



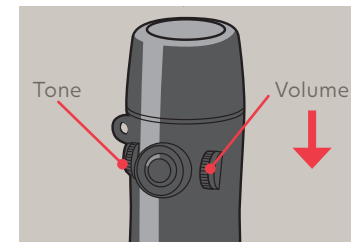
- ▶ **PRACTICE** placing the device against your neck (or placing the intraoral adapter in your mouth) before pressing the power button to start the sound.
- ▶ **PRACTICE** counting from 1-20, saying the days of the week, and months of the year. Release the power button every 3-5 words to create natural pauses in your speech.

**Tip:** After you feel comfortable with pressing and releasing the power button, you can start saying longer words, 2-3 word phrases, and sentences. Read a few paragraphs of a favorite book out loud to help with timing.

**Tip:** Release the power button when you would naturally hear pauses in speech: Pause after a phrase, when you want to emphasize a word, and in between sentences. This gives the listener extra time to understand what you said.

### PITCH AND LOUDNESS

- ▶ **SET** the loudness level so that you can clearly hear yourself within your environment. Try lowering the volume to about half to help reduce the amount of excess buzz.



- ▶ **ADJUST** pitch to a level that is more appropriate to your age and gender using the tone knob.

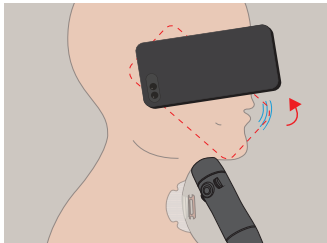
**Tip:** If you need assistance, the pitch of the EL can be set by your clinician during a treatment session.

## SPEAKING ON THE PHONE

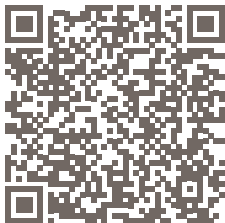
If pitch is set fairly high, try setting it a little lower. Phones may pick-up and distort higher pitches.

Lower the volume of the electrolarynx. Phones amplify sound, so it will sound even louder to the listener.

Keep the electrolarynx itself and the phone mouthpiece as far separated as possible to prevent the phone from picking up excess buzzing from the device. Try pointing the phone above your nose to create more distance between the phone and the EL.



Watch the video “Resolving poor sound quality of an Electrolarynx”:  
<https://www.atosmedical.us/videos/caretips-electrolarynx-resolving-poor-sound-quality>  
 or scan this QR code:



## PRESSURE-SENSITIVE POWER BUTTON AND VARIABLE TONE

The Provox TruTone Plus electrolarynx and Provox TruTone EMOTE electrolarynx both feature a pressure sensitive power button. Depending on what mode your device is set in, this pressure sensitive button will determine how much variation in tone you have available.

Variable tone can be controlled by applying light or hard pressure on the power button. Light pressure will result in a deeper “base” tone. As you increase pressure on the power button the tone will begin to rise. This allows you to sound more natural as you can add emphasis to your speech and show excitement.

### Tips for EL use:

- Familiarize yourself with the EL, read the instructions carefully, and practice using the controls.
- Just mouth your words – do not force air out of your stoma when trying to speak.
- Keep your arm close to your chest/side when you are speaking, it helps prevent your arm from getting tired and changing the angle of the EL.
- Keep your chin in a natural position (don't tilt your head back when speaking).
- Maintain eye contact with listeners, speak at a normal rate and allow new listeners time to adjust to the sound of the EL.
- Practice with a family member; it is important that everyone gets used to this new way of communicating.
- Be careful not to cover up your mouth when using an EL. Many listeners read lips to help them understand what you are saying.

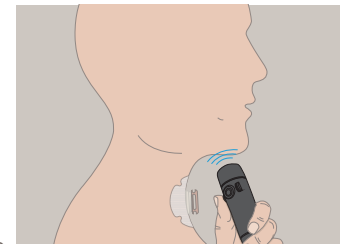
## PRACTICING VARIABLE TONE

Start with three word phrases and repeat them while emphasizing a different word each time.

Example: **How** are you?  
 How **are** you?  
 How are **you**?



You can practice this by pointing the device away from you, so you can focus on adding and reducing pressure. Once you feel more confident you can then place the device on your sweet spot.



**Sweet spot:** The location on your neck or cheek where the vibrations from the device most effectively penetrate the tissue, resulting in a strong tone.