

New recommendations on hoarseness for primary care physicians

October 5 2009

Primary care physicians face limitations when evaluating patients for voice problems including hoarseness (dysphonia), according to new research presented at the 2009 American Academy of Otolaryngology-Head and Neck Surgery Foundation (AAO-HNSF) Annual Meeting & OTO EXPO, in San Diego, CA.

The authors discovered that among 271 [primary care physicians](#), only a third (36.5%) routinely evaluated their patients for voice problems. Nearly one in five (18.1%) never evaluate their patient for a voice disorder. These physicians cited a variety of reasons, including a lack of patient complaint, more pressing issues, or not feeling comfortable with assessing voice ailments. However, over two-thirds expressed an interest in learning more about voice problems.

Voice disorders will affect approximately 30 percent of patients in their lifetimes, severely impacting their qualities of life and contributing to significant decreases in work productivity. However, only a minority of these patients will seek treatment, highlighting the need for improved methods for identifying and treating these patients.

The research coincides with the AAO-HNS' release of the first multi-discipline clinical guidelines for treating hoarseness in patients.

Source: American Academy of Otolaryngology

Citation: New recommendations on hoarseness for primary care physicians (2009, October 5)
retrieved 27 April 2024 from

<https://medicalxpress.com/news/2009-10-hoarseness-primary-physicians.html>

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