

Can conventional speech therapy combined with singing address voice problems in individuals with Parkinson's disease?

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Speech and voice disorders are common in individuals with Parkinson's disease. New research published in the *International Journal of*

Language & Communication Disorders found that a tele-rehabilitation program that combines conventional speech therapy and singing may help improve patients' voice problems.

For the study, 33 people with Parkinson's disease were randomly assigned to receive the combination [therapy](#), conventional speech therapy, or a singing intervention. Each patient participated in 12 tele-rehabilitation sessions over four weeks. Voice-related tests were conducted one week before the first intervention session, one week after the last intervention session, and three months after the last evaluation.

The results showed significant improvements in all three groups after treatment in all outcomes over time. Patients who were in the combination or speech therapy groups showed a greater increase in voice intensity and what's called the Voice Handicap Index (VHI) compared with patients in the singing intervention group. (The VHI measures patients' perceptions of the impact of their voice disorder.) Also, combination therapy, compared with singing or [speech](#) therapy in isolation, had significantly greater effects on the VHI, maximum frequency range, and shimmer.

"Tele-rehabilitation [combination therapy](#) is an inexpensive and enjoyable behavioral treatment," the authors wrote. "The advantages of this method are that it is easy to access, appropriate for many stages of voice problems in Parkinson's disease, requires no prior singing training, encourages voice health and self-management, and maximizes treatment resources available to people with Parkinson's disease."

More information: Voice improvement following conventional speech therapy combined with singing intervention in people with Parkinson's disease: A 3-arm randomized controlled trial, *International Journal of Language & Communication Disorders* (2023). [DOI: 10.1111/1460-6984.12900](#)

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