



Banner Good Samaritan Medical Center

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The LSVT® (Lee Silverman Voice Treatment)

Helping to improve the lives of people with Parkinson's disease

Do people ask you to repeat what you say? You are not alone, approximately 75-89 percent of individuals with Parkinson disease (PD) experience problems with their speech and voice at some time during the course of their disease. Symptoms include reduced vocal loudness, flat-pitch, hoarse voice, and mumbled/slurred speech. The exact cause of these speech symptoms is not clearly understood. In addition, people with Parkinson's may not be aware that they are getting softer in their speech and are more difficult to understand. These voice and speech symptoms can have a negative impact on quality of life by affecting one's ability to communicate with family and friends.

Can you improve voice and speech with PD?

Medications and surgery may dramatically improve other PD symptoms but they have limited or no beneficial effects on voice and speech. Through 15 years of research, an effective voice and speech treatment was developed specifically for individuals with Parkinson's disease called the LSVT® (Lee Silverman Voice Treatment). LSVT is an efficacious voice treatment program developed to improve speech and voice in PD. It is the only speech therapy for PD deemed worthy of Level 1 data! LSVT has also been effective in treating voice and speech in other neurological disorders including stroke, Down's syndrome, cerebral palsy and multiple sclerosis.

The LSVT is an individually administered, four-week treatment program. It is designed to train increased vocal loudness and teach the patient to speak at normal loudness levels. Speech clinicians must attend a two-day training course to become a Certified LSVT Clinician, in addition to their training as a speech

therapist. At Banner Good Samaritan Medical Center, we have several certified LSVT clinicians who are highly experienced in the LSVT and treating Parkinson's disease.

In addition to increased vocal loudness and improved functional communication, preliminary research indicates improvements in swallowing, brain function (PET/MRI studies) and facial expression after the LSVT.

How do I get LSVT?

If you are experiencing any changes in your speech or voice, or would like to learn techniques to help maintain your voice and speech, ask your doctor for a referral for LSVT speech therapy. It is best if the physician can write a prescription for, "Speech evaluation with laryngeal video stroboscopy examination (LVSE) and treatment utilizing the LSVT." The LVSE is a technique used to visualize the vocal folds to assess their structure and function. This is important and essential prior to beginning any voice therapy.

LSVT has been successfully reimbursed by many insurance providers and Medicare. Insurance plans can vary so it is best to check with your insurance about the benefits of your policy.

How do you schedule a video stroboscopy exam?

Your physician's office must submit a written prescription and diagnosis documenting the procedure. The physician's office may also need to obtain insurance authorization for patients. The prescription can be faxed to (602) 839-6200 to schedule the procedure. Our schedulers will contact the patient to schedule an appointment date/time.