# Calcium supplementation in dysphonia: myth or evidence-based practice?

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Dysphonia is a common clinical symptom with a wide range of underlying etiologies, including functional, inflammatory, neurologic, and structural causes. Despite advances in diagnostic approaches and treatment modalities, misconceptions about its management persist in everyday clinical practice. This study aims to highlight the inappropriate recommendation and self-initiated use of calcium supplements for the treatment of dysphonia, a practice not supported by current medical evidence. A retrospective review was conducted of patients presenting with dysphonia over a three-year period at a tertiary phoniatric center. Approximately 30% reported being advised to use calcium supplements prior to specialist evaluation. Recommendations originated from various sources, including general practitioners, otolaryngologists, and pharmacists. In addition, many patients reported self-initiated calcium use based on non-medical advice – most commonly from family members, friends, or online sources. Given that calcium is widely available over-the-counter, access to and use of such supplements was often unregulated and not medically supervised. A review of the literature revealed no scientific basis for calcium supplementation in the treatment of dysphonia. Moreover, excessive or unnecessary intake – especially in effervescent form – can result in increased sodium load, gastrointestinal side effects, or in rare cases, hypercalcemia, particularly in elderly or comorbid patients. This presentation underscores the need for improved public and professional education regarding the evidence-based management of voice disorders. Unsubstantiated therapies such as calcium supplementation not only lack efficacy but may also delay proper diagnosis and treatment, especially when driven by non-medical advice and easy over-the-counter availability.

Key words: Dysphonia, calcium supplements, self-medication, inappropriate treatment, voice disorder