

HEALTH AND SAFETY INFORMATION FOR MUSIC STUDENTS

The Columbia College Music Program, in compliance with the standards of the National Association of Schools of Music, is obligated to keep students informed of health and safety issues that are inherent in the study and performance of music. This includes the instrumental, vocal, and keyboard practice, performance, and teaching of music as well as listening to music in ensembles, the classroom, the recording studio/booth, music lab and with portable or smart devices.

The information that follows is intended to help prevent music related injuries and illnesses and to raise awareness among students and faculty of the relationship between the health of a musician and the technology, practice and rehearsal facilities, and other equipment used in the production of music.

It is important that all students and faculty understand that each individual is personally responsible for their own health and safety and depends on the personal decisions that we make. Columbia College does everything in its power to provide health and safety information (see the college's website, the *Student Handbook*, and the *CC Bulletin*) and to make the campus, its buildings, classrooms, practice rooms, performance and rehearsal facilities, labs, etc. safe. However, this does not replace any student's or faculty member's personal responsibility to make wise and informed decisions.

Anyone who is involved in any way with our music program at Columbia College has the potential to suffer injuries associated with their specific music discipline. Instrumentalists can suffer repetitive motion problems, vocalists can suffer vocal cord injuries and all musicians and students in general can suffer from stress related injuries. The following are suggestions for health and safety with which all musicians should be familiar:

- Reduce force and avoid fixed and/or tense positions
- Always warm up before any practice or performance
- Take regular breaks, short pauses during practice and longer breaks between practice sessions
- If you experience pain or injuries, try to determine if these were caused by your music activity or by other activities that you do occasionally or regularly. For example, computer use is notorious for causing some serious injuries such as carpal tunnel syndrome and tendinitis
- If you experience a pain or an injury, seek medical advice/attention from a professional as soon as possible, use common sense
- In general, practice good health through eating a balanced diet, exercising regularly, getting proper rest, drink water as needed for hydration, avoid arid and/or artificial climates for long periods, breathe properly taking time occasionally to rest quietly and take long controlled breaths
- Stay informed about health issues, get a flu shot, research health issues particular to your instrumental or vocal discipline
- Keep your instrument and your hands antiseptically clean
- Avoid sounds or noises that are potentially harmful to your hearing. These are generally noises that exceed 85 decibels, remembering that 45 decibels is the humming of a kitchen appliance such as a refrigerator and 60 decibels is the level of downtown city traffic. Exposure and especially long exposure to sounds above 85 decibels can cause injury to your hearing. Musicians should always be sensitive to the level of amplified sounds such as those used in rock and jazz bands and also in portable devices such as iPods and smart devices/phones. Whenever using headphones, students should be aware of the sustained sound level and adjust it to an appropriate level for hearing health.

The following publications deal with health and safety awareness for musicians:

- Conable, Barbara: *What Every Musician needs to Know About the Body*(GIA Publications, 2000)
- Klickstein, Gerald: *The Musicians Way – A Guide to Practice, Performance, and Wellness* (Oxford, 2009)
- Norris, Richard: *The Musician's Survival Manual* (International Conference of Symphony and Opera Musicians, 1993)

The following are websites that deal with health and safety awareness for musicians:

- http://www.wcsu.edu/music/NASM_PAMA-Student_Information_Sheet-Standard.pdf
- http://nasm.arts-accredit.org/site/docs/PAMA-NASM_Advisories/4a_NASM_PAMA-Student_Guide-Standard.pdf
- http://nasm.arts-accredit.org/site/docs/PAMA-NASM_Advisories/2_NASM_PAMA-Faculty_and_Staff_2011Nov.pdf
- http://nasm.arts-accredit.org/index.jsp?page=NASM-PAMA_Hearing_Health
- <https://www.osha.gov/SLTC/noisehearingconservation/index.html>
- <http://www.neworleansmusiciansclinic.org/medical-resources/hearing/hearing-loss-decibel-levels/>
- <http://www.concertgoersguide.org/backstage/noises.php>
- <http://www.gcaudio.com/resources/howtos/loudness.html>
- <http://www.working-well.org/articles/pdf/Musicians.pdf>
- <http://www.musicianshealth.com/whyrssi.htm>
- <http://www.webmd.com/anxiety-panic/guide/stage-fright-performance-anxiety>
- <http://www.innergameofmusic.com/innergamebook>
- <http://www.artsmed.org/index.html>

Specific information on health and safety considerations can be found in the syllabus for each music course at Columbia College and in the *Music Program Handbook*.