CAUSES OF VOICE DISORDERS

Voice disorders often result from **misuse or overuse of the voice**. When a person shouts, screams, or speaks loudly for long periods—such as teachers talking all day or children shouting during play—the vocal cords can become strained. Over time, this strain may cause hoarseness or even small growths like vocal nodules. For example, a student who yells frequently during sports may develop a rough, tired voice by the end of the day.

Medical and health-related conditions are another common cause of voice disorders. Infections like laryngitis can inflame the vocal cords, making the voice sound weak or hoarse. Allergies and frequent colds can also affect voice quality. For instance, a child with ongoing allergies may often sound nasal or lose their voice easily, especially during the allergy season.

Some voice disorders are caused by **neurological problems** that affect the nerves controlling the vocal cords. Conditions such as stroke, Parkinson's disease, or head injuries can interfere with normal voice production. For example, a person who has had a stroke may speak with a very weak or breathy voice because one vocal cord is not moving properly.

Structural problems of the vocal cords can also lead to voice disorders. These include growths, scars, or abnormalities present from birth. A child born with a vocal cord abnormality may always sound hoarse, even without shouting or illness. Similarly, someone with a vocal cord polyp may experience sudden changes in voice quality.

Emotional and psychological factors can strongly influence the voice. Stress, anxiety, or emotional trauma can cause tension in the throat muscles, leading to a tight or strained voice. For example, a student who feels very anxious about speaking in class may sound shaky or lose their voice during presentations, even though their vocal cords are physically healthy.

Finally, **environmental factors** can irritate the voice and contribute to voice disorders. Smoking, exposure to smoke, polluted air, or very dry environments can damage the vocal cords. For instance, a person who smokes regularly may develop a deep, rough voice over time, while someone living in a dry climate may often feel throat dryness and voice fatigue.