

**UNC CHARLOTTE**  
**DEPARTMENT OF MUSIC HEALTH & SAFETY GUIDELINES**

Introduction

The UNC Charlotte Department of Music, as required by the National Association of Schools of Music, is obligated to inform students and faculty of health and safety issues to anyone who might be physically endangered by practicing, performing, teaching, or listening to music. This includes information regarding hearing, vocal and musculoskeletal health, injury prevention, and the use, proper handling, and operation of materials and equipment. Specific means for the provision of this information include:

1. Providing a statement regarding musician's health and hearing in every syllabus for every course that includes the practice and performance of music.
2. Scheduling a mandatory informational session at the beginning of each Fall semester for all music students, orienting them to the health and safety guidelines of the Department of Music
3. Supplying a page on the Department of Music's website outlining potential music-related injuries and hearing loss, with suggestions for avoiding damage and contact information for qualified on-campus professionals.
4. Providing and encouraging the use of free earplugs in those ensembles in which sound levels typically approach thresholds for hearing loss.

## UNCC DEPARTMENT OF MUSIC HEALTH & SAFETY INFORMATION

The brief descriptions and links below are provided to help you find information that may be useful to you in avoiding injury or in seeking professional help for an injury. They are not intended to provide a professional diagnosis or to qualify you for self-diagnosis. If you are experiencing problems similar to those outlined below, you should seek professional help, either from university medical personnel ([studenthealth.uncc.edu](http://studenthealth.uncc.edu)) or from your family doctor.

### **For more information on Health & Safety for Schools of Music, please visit:**

National Association of School of Music (<http://nasm.arts-accredit.org>)

Performing Arts Medicine Association (<http://www.artsmed.org/index.html>)

### **Health and Safety Standards Organizations**

American National Standards Institute (ANSI) (<http://www.ansi.org/>)

The National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH)  
(<http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/>)

Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) (<http://www.osha.gov/>)

### **HEARING LOSS**

Hearing loss is an avoidable problem with the proper knowledge and protection. The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) has published guidelines outlining limits to exposure to loud noises in the workplace. For musicians, these limits may be reached or exceeded even in what one might think are routine musical experiences, such as practicing or performing, whether alone in a practice room or in an ensemble--or even when listening to live or recorded music.

### **Medical Organizations Focused on Hearing Health**

American Academy of Audiology (<http://www.audiology.org/Pages/default.aspx>)

American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA) (<http://www.asha.org/>)

Athletes and the Arts (<http://athletesandthearts.com/>)

House Research Institute – Hearing Health

(<http://www.hei.org/education/health/health.htm>)

National Hearing Conservation Association (<http://www.hearingconservation.org/>)

### **General Information on Acoustics**

Acoustical Society of America (<http://acousticalsociety.org/>)

Acoustics.com (<http://www.acoustics.com>)

### **REPETITIVE STRESS INJURIES**

Repetitive stress injuries are often experienced by musicians and can result from many factors including intensive practice or inefficient technique. Several of the most common types of injury include *tendonitis* (inflammation of the tendons in the wrist, elbow, or shoulder) and *carpal tunnel syndrome* (inflammation of the median nerve in the wrist).

American Physical Therapy Association (<http://www.apta.org/>)

Move Well and Avoid Injury ([Movewellavoidinjury.com](http://Movewellavoidinjury.com))

### **PERFORMANCE ANXIETY**

Performance anxiety, commonly referred to as “stage fright,” is a distressing and disabling condition that affects performers of all ages. At least half of all performing artists, regardless of age, gender, and talent or experience level, report problems associated with performance anxiety.

Musicians' Wellness Inc. ([www.performancewellness.org](http://www.performancewellness.org))

Athletes And The Arts ([www.athletesandthearts.com](http://www.athletesandthearts.com))

### **SPECIFIC TRAINING TECHNIQUES FOR AVOIDING INJURY**

The websites below present some of the many varieties of training techniques that have been developed specifically with musicians in mind. Some of these are relatively simple and free, while others require professional training. It would be good to research their claims and techniques carefully before paying for any specific regimen or series of trainings.

Alexander Technique ([www.alexandertechnique.com](http://www.alexandertechnique.com))

What Every Musician Should Know ([www.bodymap.org](http://www.bodymap.org))

Feldenkrais Method ([www.feldenkrais.com](http://www.feldenkrais.com))

Musicians Survival Manual

([www.musiciansurvivalmanual.com/Exercise\\_for\\_Musicians.html](http://www.musiciansurvivalmanual.com/Exercise_for_Musicians.html))

Playing Less Hurt ([www.playinglesshurt.com/links/](http://www.playinglesshurt.com/links/))

**Vocal Health.** Singers, teachers, and others who use their voices for a living can be susceptible to specific voice-related injuries. Some of these can result in permanent damage that may affect a career. Specialized training is required to diagnose and treat these problems.

The Voice Doctor ([www.voicedoctor.net](http://www.voicedoctor.net))

Singing for a Living ([www.singingforaliving.com/articles/vocal-health-tips/](http://www.singingforaliving.com/articles/vocal-health-tips/))

### **Websites Related to Specific Instruments**

A brass players' resource for dental and facial problems ([www.embouchures.com](http://www.embouchures.com))

Thomas Mark's Piano mapping, movement retraining for pianists ([www.pianomap.com](http://www.pianomap.com))

### **General Musicians' Health Websites**

American Federation of Musicians ([www.afm.org/resources/health-and-therapy](http://www.afm.org/resources/health-and-therapy))

Eastman School of Music Learning Center ([www.polyphonic.org](http://www.polyphonic.org))

Healthy Musicians Workshop ([www.healthymusicianworkshop.com](http://www.healthymusicianworkshop.com))

Adapted from *Musicians' Health Tips & Links*, Western Carolina University