

## **Topic: Hypernasality**

### **Title: How to teach proper oral-nasal resonance balance**

Pam receives weekly questions from therapists struggling with how to decrease hypernasality in clients who have adequate velo-pharyngeal structure.

Pam is not an expert in this area, but she would like to share what she does to help clients become less nasal. These clients generally can achieve oral sound, but they become hypernasal in connected speech.

There is no “oral-motor” work that needs to be done. The client already can lift the velum to make oral sound, and he already can lower the velum to make nasal sound. He just doesn’t control these movements at the right times.

This is refined ear training. These clients have to learn to hear when they are making sound orally, and when they are making is nasally. And they have to learn to control this process.

#### **Procedure:**

Use a flexible tube about 1-foot in length. Have the client stretch it from his nose to his ear, so he can hear when he is making nasal sound. And have him stretch it from his mouth to his ear, so he can hear when he is making oral sound

Pam does the following over time. She made this up by thinking through the process logically. Since then, she has read about other therapists who do generally the same thing—

1. Start with having the client EXPERIENCING vowels and nasals (listen to V’s & nasals). Help him discover that vowels come out the mouth while nasals come out the nose. Say, “That sound is coming out your nose.” And “That sound is coming out your mouth.”
2. Help the client learn to DIFFERENTIALLY CONTROL vowels and nasals. Have them listen to themselves produce vowels and nasals with the tube. These clients already can do this. You are teaching them to listen to themselves so they can HEAR themselves do it.
3. Help the client learn to DISCRIMINATE oral and nasal sound. Ask, “Did that sound come out the mouth or the nose?”
4. Have the client make SIMPLE WORDS that are completely oral, and help learn to hear that they are completely oral. For example, have him say, *hi, out,*

*up, yuck...* and have him monitor the nasality throughout.

5. Help the client learn to make SIMPLE WORDS that are sequenced oral-to-nasal and learn to hear the sequence, or the shift, from oral to nasal. For example, *on, in, an, I'm...* (monitor the sequencing).

6. Learn to make SIMPLE WORDS that are sequenced nasal-to-oral, and help the client learn to hear the sequence, or the shift, from nasal to oral. For example, practice *me, my, ma, no, nay....*

7. Help the client advance to more difficult work from there. Move on to multi-syllabic words, words with two or more nasal sounds, phrases, sentences, and conversation.