

Dr Aaron Johnson



Aaron M. Johnson, MM, PhD, CCC-SLP, is a researcher, educator, and speech–language pathologist specializing in voice habilitation and rehabilitation. He is an Associate Professor in the Department of Otolaryngology–Head and Neck Surgery at NYU Grossman School of Medicine and serves as Co-Director of the NYU Langone Voice & Swallowing Center. His laboratory, supported by the National Institutes of Health, uses both basic and clinical research methods to investigate laryngeal neuromuscular plasticity, including how it is affected by injury, disease, and aging, and how it may be improved through training and treatment.

Dr. Johnson’s translational research is notable for its innovative use of rat ultrasonic vocalizations as a model for studying the relationship between vocal behavior and underlying laryngeal neuromuscular plasticity. Building on his early work showing that vocal training could reduce age-related changes in vocal acoustics and neuromuscular junction stability in older rats, his ongoing research continues to refine the type, intensity, and duration of vocal interventions while probing mechanisms such as muscle hypertrophy and proteomic adaptation. His current research challenges the clinical dichotomy between vocal fold mucosal injury and laryngeal muscle dysfunction by examining how mucosal injury affects the structure, function, and mechanistic response of the underlying thyroarytenoid muscle. His clinical research extends these questions to human populations, including older adults, in whom he has studied the effects of singing and vocal training using traditional acoustic and aerodynamic measures as well as advanced imaging approaches such as high-resolution 3D magnetic resonance imaging. He is also

interested in exploring how novel technologies, in collaboration with bioengineers, can be used to objectively quantify vocal hyperfunction and measure ambulatory voice use.

As a clinician, Dr. Johnson works as part of a multidisciplinary team at NYU Langone's Voice & Swallowing Center, where he evaluates and treats patients with voice disorders, including performers who require highly specialized voice habilitation and rehabilitation. His clinical approach is grounded in both technical knowledge and practical artistic experience. His professional path into research and clinical voice care grew out of an earlier decade-long career as a professional classical singer and singing teacher, including regular performances with the Chicago Symphony Chorus and Chicago a cappella.

Dr. Johnson is also a dedicated educator whose teaching reflects a longstanding commitment to bridging the art and science of voice. At New York University, he teaches vocology in both the graduate vocal pedagogy program and in the School of Professional Studies online Vocology Certificate Program, which he founded. His broader professional engagement includes leadership roles in the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA), the National Association of Teachers of Singing, and the Pan American Vocology Association (PAVA).

Dr. Johnson holds degrees in vocal performance from Northwestern University, a master's degree in speech-language pathology from Rush University, and a PhD from the University of Wisconsin. He completed his clinical fellowship at the University of Wisconsin Voice and Swallowing Clinic, is a licensed speech-language pathologist, and has been recognized as both a PAVA-Recognized Vocologist and an ASHA Fellow. His career reflects a sustained commitment to advancing vocal health through research, education, and clinical care.