

COMMUNICATION & SWALLOWING DIFFICULTIES POST STROKE

60% of people who have had a stroke will develop a swallowing difficulty (dysphagia) and around 20% will have difficulty using speech. While 30% will have difficulty with expressing their ideas, finding the right words or understanding spoken/written language.

We can work with you following a stroke if you are experiencing any changes in communication and/or swallowing skill.

We can provide specialised therapy and advice to best support you through your recovery.

APHASIA

Aphasia (language difficulties) is caused by damage to the parts of the brain that control language & can result in difficulty understanding what other people say, losing the meaning of words and difficulty recognising words.

It can be difficult for the person to express what they want to say or find words and they may get stuck on particular sounds. People with aphasia can find it hard to interpret body language, read or write.

DYSARTHRIA

Dysarthria (speech difficulties) involves muscle weakness, paralysis or poor coordination of the breathing and speech muscles. This can affect a person's speech volume or cause them to slur their speech and impact being understood by others.

'Empowering people to Speak & Eat with Confidence'

DYSPHAGIA

Dysphagia is difficulty in swallowing, meaning someone has difficulty chewing food or keeping food/liquid in their mouth. This can lead to coughing and choking, which can lead to food collecting in the lungs (aspiration).

DYSPRAXIA

Dyspraxia means difficulty planning and coordinating the muscle movements needed to form speech. It can be hard for the person to find the correct mouth position needed to make sounds, move smoothly between sounds or coordinate muscle movements needed to chew & swallow.

Source: Speech Pathology Australia



Strategies that can help

Families and friends can help someone who has had a stroke by:

- Talk in short, clear sentences.
- Allow the person extra time to speak, avoid rushing or trying to complete their sentence.
- Encourage the person to be as independent as possible, assist them if asked or required.
- Encourage the person to communicate, even if this takes extra time.
- Be sensitive to the person's sense of loss and/or frustration.

Treatment Solutions

Early intervention from a Speech Pathologist is recommended following a stroke to best support recovery. Often therapy will involve four components.

1. **Remediation:** exercises to help improve the underlying problem.
2. **Compensation:** strategies to help make up for lost abilities.
3. **Education:** upskilling and empowering the person and their loved ones understand what's happening & why.
4. **Participation:** the end goal is to restore the person to full participation in life so sessions will include activities to help transfer skills learned into the outside world.

Thank You.

We look forward to helping you.

Contact Us

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