

Communication After Stroke: Aphasia

Communication problems are common after a stroke. Aphasia is a common communication impairment. It can affect a person's ability to speak, read, write, and understand what others say.

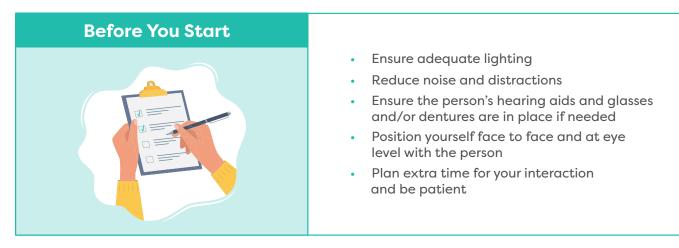
What you should know

- \checkmark 1 in 3 people who have had a stroke will have aphasia
- Aphasia impacts a person's ability to use language. It does NOT impact their intelligence. They may know more than they can say
- Communicating with someone with aphasia can take time and effort for both you and the person with aphasia. It gets easier with practice
- \checkmark Aphasia can lead to frustration, social isolation and depression
- ✓ Better communication can improve care and quality of life for the person with aphasia
- A person may have one or both of the following types of aphasia:

Receptive Aphasia - trouble taking messages IN; difficulty understanding what is heard or read

Expressive Aphasia - trouble getting messages OUT; difficulty speaking or writing

Smart Tips - Always follow the care plan!



Continues on next page.

Communication After Stroke: Aphasia

Keep it Simple Make sure you both know the topic and be very clear when the topic changes Speak in short simple sentences Ask YES/NO questions Offer choice: "Do you want A or B, or neither?" **Be Respectful** Speak slowly and clearly in a normal tone and volume Acknowledge competence "I know you know" Include the person with aphasia in conversations - do not speak for them Avoid interrupting, allow them time to finish their sentence **Encourage Communication** Use gestures Write down key words during your interaction Have them point to words or pictures; use a BRUSH communication board TEETH **Confirm the Message** Repeat what you think the person said to verify what you understood Pay attention to body language and facial expressions Acknowledge frustration, it's okay to admit that you don't understand Offer to try again later Seek extra support

- Speech Language Pathologists are the experts in communication. It may be helpful to involve them in the person's care
- For more information about Aphasia, please visit the Aphasia Institute https://www.aphasia.ca/