

Strategies to Help Communication

In General:

- Talk in a quiet, relaxed, non-distracting environment. Reduce distractions by turning off the radio and television.
- Family and friends will need to take extra responsibility to keep the conversation going.
- Talk to the person as an adult.
- Address the person clearly, but don't yell or shout. Talking loudly will not help the person understand.
- Avoid talking about the person with dysphasia to others as though they were not there -talk to the person.
- Never assume that the person is not trying. A person's ability to speak or understand will fluctuate markedly during the day and from day to day.
- Be aware that people with dysphasia may tire easily. Allow the person time to rest when fatigued. "Pushing" the person may cause further frustration.

When you are listening

- Make sure you are looking at the person
- Allow the person plenty of time to speak
- Encourage the person to use gesture, such as hand movements or facial expressions.

When you are talking

- Make sure the person can see your face easily
- Use simple language - avoid complicated words
- Allow the person plenty of time to understand what has been said
- Ask questions that require a yes / no or one word response. e.g. 'Would you like a vanilla or chocolate ice cream?' or 'Would you like a chocolate ice cream?'
- Draw, write or gesture to add more meaning to your spoken words
- Slowly repeat instructions or key words if you are concerned the other person has not understood.

**Do you need Assistance?
Call the following Number**

Esheø Learning Center
662 6 7206.

Resources

- <http://www.speakability.org.uk/>
- <http://www.nnuh.nhs.uk/Dept.asp?ID=688>
- <http://medical-dictionary.thefreedictionary.com/dysphasia>
- <http://www.wisegEEKhealth.com/what-is-dysphasia.htm>
- <http://www.epworth.org.au/OurServices/AlliedHealth/Documents/ERB%20Dysphasia%20DL.pdf>
- <http://swana.org.uk/Dysphasia%20L.pdf>

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A Guide to Dysphasia



THE QUICK BROWN
FOX JUMPED OVER
THE LAZY DOG. the
quick brown fox
jumped over the
lazy dog.
0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

Dysphasia

What is Dysphasia?

Dysphasia is a partial or complete impairment of the ability to communicate resulting from brain injury.

Dysphasia is a language disorder characterized by difficulty speaking and/or difficulty comprehending spoken speech. Individuals with dysphasia may not be able to speak in coherent sentences, may struggle for the right words to use, may insert words which do not make sense into their sentences, or may have difficulty understanding someone else's spoken speech. For patients, dysphasia can be extremely frustrating, as the ability to communicate is limited by the patient's language difficulties. Dysphasia can affect one or more of the basic language functions: comprehension (understanding spoken language), naming (identifying items with words), repetition (repeating words or phrases), and speech .

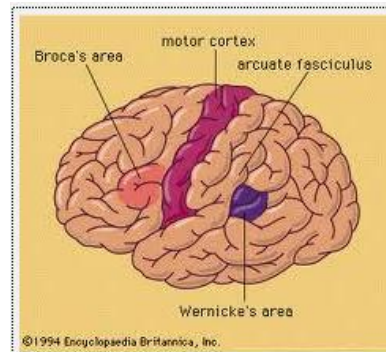
Types of Dysphasia

- **Receptive dysphasia** - problems with understanding language.
- **Expressive dysphasia** - difficulties with saying what you want to.
- **Mixed dysphasia** - a combination of issues that affect most or all types of communication.

Causes & Symptoms

Although dysphasia may manifest in several ways, the common cause for its onset is damage or trauma to the brain. Stroke, in particular, is the most common cause for dysphasia. Infection, direct trauma, transient ischemic attack (TIA), brain tumors, and degeneration can also instigate the onset of dysphasia.

Symptoms of dysphasia will quickly manifest after damage to the brain has occurred, and will present in accordance to the particular type of dysphasia suffered. Due to the proximity to areas of the brain that control motor function, expressive dysphasia can be accompanied by noticeable motor impairment. The majority of symptoms will be language related.



The areas affected in dysphasia are nicely marked. In expressive dysphasia, the red circle (Broca's area) dies, and in receptive dysphasia, the purple circle (Wernicke's area) dies.

Symptoms of Expressive dysphasia:

- Not being able to use words to speak at all.
- Only being able to use single words or short sentences, but nothing longer, or missing out some words in a sentence.
- Having difficulty with finding the right word to use, and having to take long pauses while speaking.
- Answering "yes" but mean "no" or vice versa.
- Knowing which word you want to say, but saying a different one.
- Using words and sentences that do not make sense, including use of non-words, without realising that it does not make sense.
- Being able to describe things but not think of their name.
- Using the same few words in answer to everything (this can include swear words)
- Getting stuck on certain words and repeating them a number of times.
- Having trouble with reading, with words on the page not making sense
- Having difficulties with writing.

Symptoms of receptive dysphasia:

- Not understanding what people say.
- Feeling as though people are speaking in a foreign language.
- Not understanding long, complicated sentences, or forgetting part of what has been said.
- Having difficulty understanding someone speaking to you when there are distractions or background noise.
- Not understanding things that you read, or being able to read out loud.
- Being able to write, but not to read back what has been written.