



Aphasia Communication Tips



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Communication Strategies: Some Dos and Don'ts

The impact of aphasia on relationships may be profound, or only slight. No two people with aphasia are alike with respect to severity, former speech and language skills, or personality. But in all cases it is essential for the person to communicate as successfully as possible from the very beginning of the recovery process. Here are some suggestions to help communicate with a person with aphasia:

Make sure you have the person's attention before you start.

Minimize or eliminate background noise (TV, radio, other people).

Keep your own voice at a normal level, unless the person has indicated otherwise.

Keep communication simple, but adult. Simplify your own sentence structure and reduce your rate of speech. Emphasize key words. Don't "talk down" to the person with aphasia.

Give them time to speak. Resist the urge to finish sentences or offer words.

Communicate with drawings, gestures, writing and facial expressions in addition to speech.

Confirm that you are communicating successfully with "yes" and "no" questions.

Praise all attempts to speak and downplay any errors. Avoid insisting that that each word be produced perfectly.

Engage in normal activities whenever possible. Do not shield people with aphasia from family or ignore them in a group conversation. Rather, try to involve them in family decision-making as much as possible. Keep them informed of events but avoid burdening them with day to day details.

Encourage independence and avoid being overprotective.