

The Best Aphasia Treatment for Stroke Recovery

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If you're looking for the best aphasia treatment for yourself or a loved one, then you've come to the right place. In this article, you'll learn:

- What the symptoms of aphasia are
- How language works
- Which aphasia treatments are best

Ready to get your speech back? Let's dig in!

Aphasia and Left-Brain Strokes

Aphasia is a condition that affects your ability to produce and process speech. It often occurs in people who survive left-brain strokes because your brain's language center resides in your left hemisphere.

In order to treat aphasia, you need to retrain your brain to comprehend and produce language.

To understand the best way to do this, it helps to know a bit about how language works.

How Language Works

Language is carried out in two parts: *speech perception* and *speech production*. During speech perception, the sounds of language are **heard, interpreted, and comprehended**. During speech production, your thoughts are translated into speech. This includes **selecting words, organizing grammar, and using your voice**.

Because language involves a wide variety of processes, there are many different types of aphasia, depending on how the brain was impacted by the stroke. For example, some people with aphasia might easily understand your words but find it hard to put sentences together themselves. Others might not be able to understand you, but they can successfully write down their own thoughts.

Aphasia symptoms range from person to person.

Beginning Aphasia Treatment

Therefore, before beginning aphasia treatment, it's best to get evaluated by a speech-language pathologist (SLP) who can assess your language difficulties. They will be able to determine what kind of problems you have, like problems with comprehension or forming words.

After your evaluation, your SLP will create a custom therapy regimen to treat your symptoms. For example, if you have difficulty with understanding words, then your SLP might assign some exercises for matching words to pictures. Or if you have difficulty finding the right words to say, they might assign some picture naming exercises. Or if you have difficulty using your voice, they might assign some tongue exercises to improve your motor function.

The Best Aphasia Treatment

Your aphasia treatment program will be different from other peoples' programs. Therefore, how do you know what's best for you?

First off, it's important to trust your SLP. They've had extensive training in language and stroke recovery, and they know the exercises that will help you get better. Then, follow this principle to get the best results from your program: **Do everything with high repetition.**

Why Repetition Is the Best Treatment

During aphasia recovery, you need to retrain your brain to correctly process and produce language. In order to retrain your brain, you need to activate neuroplasticity, your brain's mechanism for reorganizing itself and forming new neural connections.

Neuroplasticity is activated through *repetitive practice*. Whatever you repeat over and over and over is what your brain gets skilled at.

So if you struggle with finding the right words, then practicing naming exercises over and over and over, will help retrain your brain to get better at finding the right word. Repetition will get you the results you crave.

How to Get More Reps In

Ideally, **it's best to train once or twice a day**. This will give the new connections in your brain the reinforcement they need to strengthen. However, we know that your time with your SLP might be limited due to financial or time constraints. So, to keep up your progress in between therapy sessions, it's a great idea to keep up your language training with apps and at-home exercises.

Apps for Aphasia

There are a lot of useful apps for aphasia that contain language training games, like Constant Therapy. (See article on 3/16/2018 "Top 7 Recovery Apps to Get Valuable Therapy for Free." Some examples of the games included in aphasia apps are picture naming, word matching, and verbal practice. These apps will help you get your reps in and complete the training necessary to get your speech back.

5 Steps for Success

Alright, let's start to wrap things up. If you're trying to recover from aphasia after stroke, follow these steps:

1. Get evaluated by a speech-language pathologist.
2. Ask them for some recommended exercises based on your specific symptoms.
3. Work with your SLP at least once a week – but the more the merrier!
4. In between sessions, use aphasia apps to get your reps in.
5. Focus on *high repetition* so that you can rewire your brain and see great results.

If you follow these steps, you will see the best results possible. In time, your brain will start to rewire itself and your language perception and production will improve.