

Aphasia

communicating through the barriers

What is aphasia?

Aphasia is a language disorder that impairs the ability to communicate. It's most often caused by stroke-related injuries to areas of the brain that control speech and language.

I have aphasia.



Take your time
It may take a while to get the words out.



Let people know what works best for you
Do you want a question asked in multiple ways? Let them know.



Use assistive devices
Bring photos, diagrams, pen and paper or other helpful tools.



Frustration is OK
Don't blame yourself if you get stuck or stumble over your words. Be patient with yourself as you learn what works.

What to do if you get stuck:

1. Admit you're struggling.
2. Recap what you've discussed so far.
3. Decide whether to carry on or come back to the subject later.

I need to communicate with someone who has aphasia.



Keep it simple
Speak in short, simple sentences.



Be patient
Allow plenty of time for a response. Talk *with* the person who has aphasia, not *for* him or her.



Remove distractions
Turn off radios and TVs.



Be creative
Try writing, gesturing, drawing pictures or using devices such as smartphones and tablets.



Confirm
Repeat back what you think the person said or meant.

Facts about people with aphasia:

1. They communicate differently but are as smart as they were before they developed aphasia.
2. Their hearing is usually fine, so speaking loudly does not help.
3. Their condition just means you'll have to communicate differently with them.