

Aphasia/Dysphasia

Patient/Carer Information

Author ID: FP
Leaflet Number: SL 008
Version: 3
Name of Leaflet: Aphasia/Dysphasia
Last reviewed: March 2020
Next Review Date: March 2022



What is aphasia?

Aphasia is a condition that affects the brain and leads to problems using language correctly.

People with aphasia can experience a number of difficulties such as:

- Word finding difficulties
- Difficulties saying words or sentences
- Poor reading ability
- Poor writing ability
- Poor understanding of what is said.

Not all language areas may be affected the same way. For example, one person with aphasia may find it easier to read than talk, while another may find it easier to write than read.

Aphasia/Dysphasia

Dysphasia is another term that is sometimes used to describe a language problem. However the most commonly used term nowadays is aphasia.

Why does aphasia happen?

Aphasia is caused by damage to parts of the brain responsible for understanding and using language. Common causes include:

- Stroke
- Head injury
- Brain tumour
- Other conditions affecting the brain.

How is aphasia diagnosed?

A Speech and Language Therapist can assess and confirm the presence of aphasia or related difficulties.

How is aphasia treated?

A speech and language therapist usually diagnoses the condition by testing a person's language abilities. They can also help arrange speech and language therapy. Therapy is based on specific language targets. These may include:

- Expressive language (making yourself understood by others)
- Receptive language (understanding other people and the world around you)
- Reading and writing.

How can a carer help the person with aphasia?

- Treat the person with aphasia as an adult and provide encouragement to communicate.
- Avoid loud background noise. Remove distractions.
- Wait patiently; do not make the person with aphasia rush.
- Speak slowly and clearly, in short sentences.
- Ask simple questions that can be answered with yes or no.
- When you think you know what the person with aphasia wants, clarify to make sure you understand.
- Write key words or use pictures, drawing and gesture to explain your message. Ask the person with aphasia to draw, gesture or write if they are able to.
- Acknowledge frustration and move on if the person with aphasia is getting stuck or confused.

Need more information?

Your Speech and Language Therapist is:

and can be contacted at:

Telephone:

Associated websites and support groups

The Stroke Association: www.stroke.org.uk

Speakability: www.speakability.org.uk

Aphasia Now: www.aphasianow.org

Please use this space to write notes/reminders.

Comments, Compliments or Complaints

The Patient Relations/Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) Department provides confidential on the spot advice, information and support to patients, relatives, friends and carers.

Contact Us

Tel: 01942 822376 (Monday to Friday 9am to 4pm)

The Patient Relations/PALS Manager
Wrightington, Wigan and Leigh NHS Foundation Trust
Royal Albert Edward Infirmary
Wigan Lane
Wigan WN1 2NN

Ask 3 Questions

Become more involved in decisions about your healthcare. You may be asked to make choices about your treatment. To begin with, try to make sure you get the answers to three key questions:

1. What are my options?
2. What are the pros and cons of each option for me?
3. How do I get support to help me make a decision that is right for me?



How We Use Your Information

For details on how we collect, use and store the information we hold about you, please take a look at our “how we use your information” leaflet which can be found on the Trust website: https://www.wwl.nhs.uk/patient_information/leaflets

This leaflet is also available in audio, large print, braille and other languages upon request. For more information please ask in department/ward.

© Wrightington, Wigan and Leigh NHS Foundation Trust
All rights reserved. Not to be reproduced in whole or in part without the permission of the copyright owner

