

# APHASIA

## WHAT IS IT?



It is the damage or impairment of the language centre of the brain. A person's ability to communicate with others, the ability to speak, read, write, understand the language both verbal and written.

## Symptoms of Aphasia

Difficulty to :

✳️□ Speaks or talk

- struggle to get a word out
- find exact words I need

✳️□ Read

- takes a long time to read
- Nothing too long or complicated

✳️□ Write

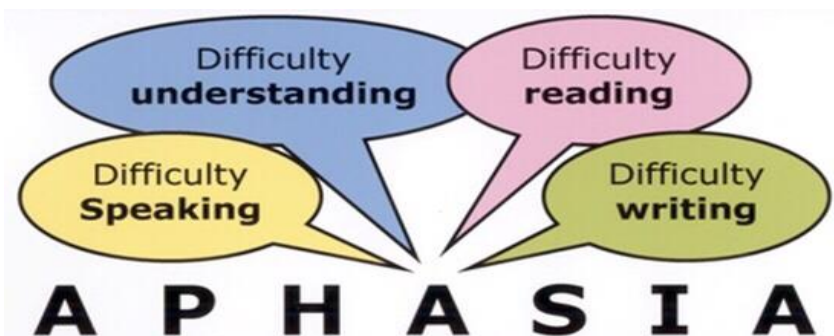
- hard to plan or organise what I want to write
- can write some letters of the word but not the whole word
- can't spell or write at all
- difficulty writing or copying letters, words and sentences

✳️□ Understand when others speak

- It takes longer to process information

✳️□ Use numbers and do calculations—eg money, time

- makes mistake with money and time



## Causes of Aphasia

Common causes of aphasia include the following:

- Stroke (most common )
  - Ischemic (CLOT)—caused by a blockage that disrupts blood flow to a region of the brain
  - Hemorrhagic (LEAK)—caused by a ruptured blood vessel that damages surrounding brain tissue
- Traumatic brain injury or brain surgery
- Brain tumours
- Brain infections and inflammation of the brain
- Progressive neurological diseases such as dementia.

## Types of Aphasia

### 1. Expressive / Non-fluent Aphasia

A difficulty in communicating thoughts, ideas and messages to others. Also **affects** every day tasks like **using the telephone, writing an email, speaking to family and friends.**

- Slow, halting speech
- Names of places, people and objects
- Related words example, saying *chair* instead of *table*
- Spelling or grammatical error

### 2. Receptive / Fluent Aphasia

- Difficulty understanding what people say
- Difficulty understanding written words
- Unaware of own speech errors.

It **affects** every day activities such as **reading an email, listening to the radio, following TV programmes, managing finances or having a conversation.**

### 3. Global Aphasia

This is the more severe and can be a combination of both.

# IMPACT

## ❖ WORK

Aphasia can affect your ability to work properly. As a dental therapist, it is difficult to speak as fluent needed, and often unable to cannot explain things properly to patients. You are also slower in processing information so you cannot understand what they are saying right away.

## ❖ TRAVEL

Aphasia makes processing information slower so it will take a while to fill out any forms and you can also get confused while reading the signs in the airport or in train stations.

## ❖ FAMILY

With aphasia, your family members will have to keep explaining things to you for you to understand. This can be very tiresome and frustrating at times.

### Important:

- Engage** in normal activities whenever possible (do you not shield or ignore them in the group conversation)
- Involve** them in family decision- making.
- Keep** them informed of events
- Encourage** independence (Do not be overprotective)

## Communication tips for persons with aphasia

- ◆  Use pen and paper
- ◆  Speak slowly and clearly
- ◆  Don't rush - slow down, be patient
- ◆  Reduce background noise
- ◆  Re-cap — check you understand
- ◆  Write down keywords
  - ◆  Say one thing at a time
  - ◆  Relax
  - ◆  Ask for help

## APHASIA IS A LIFE ALTERING EVENT !!

## APHASIA AFFECTS EVERYONE DIFFERENTLY !!

### **Resources available:**

- \*☐ Constant Therapy
- \*☐ Tactus Therapy
- \*☐ Cuespeak Therapy

### **Support:**

- ☐ Community Rehabilitation Team
- ☐ Vocational Rehabilitation Therapy
- ☐ Aphasia Re Connect Group
- ☐ Aphasia Clinic at City University
- ☐ Change for Life
- ☐ Stroke Association

JOY DARROUX