Did you know...

 Aphasia is a communication disorder that happens when your brain is injured.

Common causes may include stroke, head trauma, brain tumors, or infections.

**Signs of Aphasia**

**Difficulty**
- Talking
  - Unable to find words
  - Using the wrong word
  - Making up words
  - Mixing up similar sounds
  - Using single word vs. complex sentences

- Understanding
  - Hard to make sense of or follow conversations
  - Difficulty following jokes or sarcasm
  - Trouble in groups or loud settings

- Reading or Writing
  - Reading forms, books, and computer screens.
  - Spelling and putting words together to write sentences.
  - Using numbers or doing math - including telling time or counting money.

Either due to
- Change in how the brain processes information
- Muscle weakness or tightness around the mouth

Aphasia may affect a person's ability to process language, but **does not affect intelligence.**
Here are some tips for

**Communicating With a Person Who Has Aphasia**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Get my attention before you start speaking, maybe by saying my name first and keep eye contact with me to help maintain attention.</th>
<th>Watch my body language and the gestures I use for clues.</th>
<th>Talk to me in a quiet place - remove distractions such as noises, lights, or sounds.</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Keep your voice at a normal level - you do not need to talk louder unless I ask you to.</td>
<td>Keep the words you use simple but adult - don't &quot;talk down&quot; to me.</td>
<td>Use shorter sentences - repeat key words that you want me to understand. Slow down your speech.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Give me time to speak - it may take me longer but try not to finish my sentences for me.</td>
<td>Try using drawings, gestures, writing, and facial expressions - I may understand those better than words sometimes.</td>
<td>Ask me to draw, write, or point when I am having trouble talking.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ask me &quot;yes&quot; and &quot;no&quot; questions - those are easier than questions that I have to answer in words or sentences.</td>
<td>Let me make mistakes sometimes. I may not be able to say everything perfectly all the time.</td>
<td>Let me try to do things for myself. I may need to try a few times. Help me when I ask for it.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Resources**

- American Speech-Language-Hearing Association ([www.asha.org](http://www.asha.org))
- Model Systems Knowledge Translation Center ([www.msktc.org/tbi](http://www.msktc.org/tbi))
- National Aphasia Association ([www.aphasia.org](http://www.aphasia.org))
- Brainline.org ([www.brainline.org](http://www.brainline.org))