

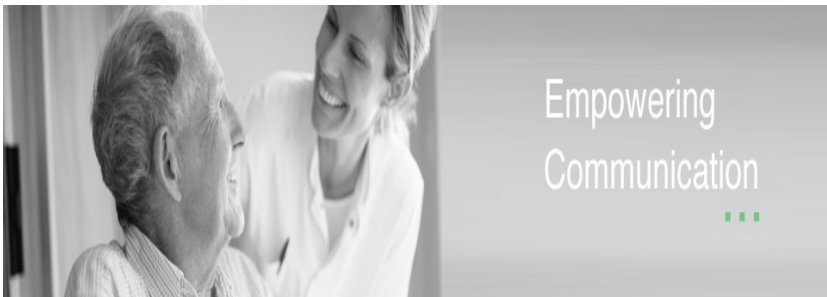
Speech Therapy for neurologically acquired disorders



Compiled by: Natasha Pillay
Speech-Language Pathologist

What is Speech Therapy?

Speech therapy is an allied health profession which focuses on helping people with communication and swallowing difficulties. Speech therapy is imperative following a stroke, head injuries and other neurologically acquired disorders. A speech pathologist is the health professional responsible for remediating communication and swallowing disorders. Treatment is conducted using various approaches and techniques dependent on the nature of the disorder.



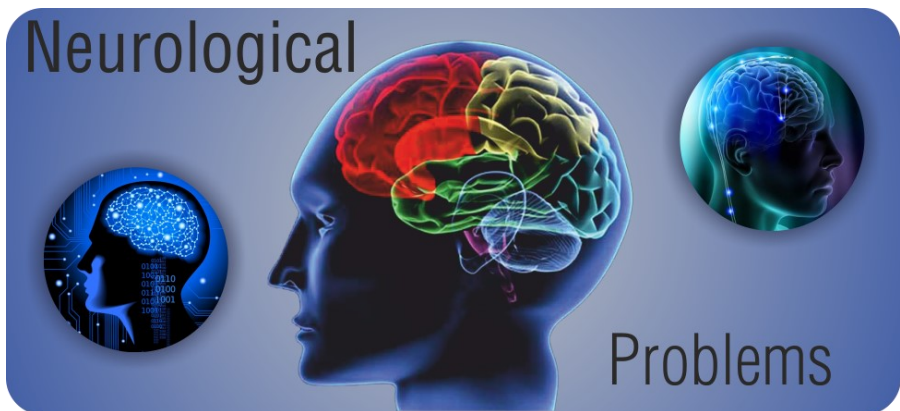
Prevalence of Neurological Disorders

Neurological disorders are becoming increasingly more common among young and older adults. The increasing prevalence of these disorders warrant appropriate intervention for resulting communication and swallowing disorders.

Types of neurological disorders

The following are examples of neurological disorders which could result in communication and swallowing disorders:

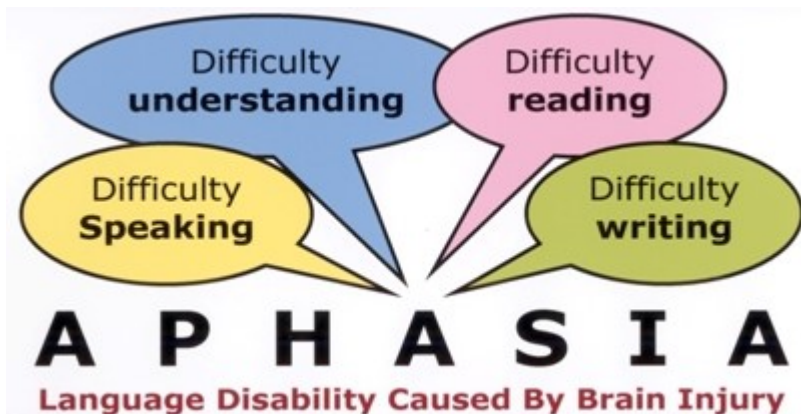
- ◆ Stroke
- ◆ Head injuries and brain tumours
- ◆ Parkinson's disease
- ◆ Muscular dystrophy
- ◆ Myasthenia Gravis
- ◆ Muscular Sclerosis
- ◆ Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis (ALS)
- ◆ Bells Palsy
- ◆ Meningitis



TYPES OF COMMUNICATION DISORDERS:

1. Aphasia

- ◆ Aphasia is a common communication impairment following a stroke which involves difficulties with either speaking, understanding, reading and writing.
- ◆ There are different types of aphasia.
- ◆ Some people have a receptive aphasia e.g. poor comprehension, others have an expressive aphasia e.g. difficulty expressing words and some have both types of difficulties.
- ◆ Speech therapy for aphasia involves different approaches and techniques for word retrieval, comprehension, reading and writing.



2. Apraxia

- ◆ Apraxia is a difficulty with sequencing speech sounds for speech production.
- ◆ This disorder can result in extreme frustration when trying to speak as the person may say the incorrect word or mix up the order of the word.
- ◆ Treatment for apraxia helps a person to learn how to sequence speech sounds for speaking as well as provide other means of communication in severe cases.

3. Dysarthria

- ◆ Dysarthria occurs as a result of muscle weakness which causes slurred or unclear speech.
- ◆ Speech may sound slurred or unintelligible or there may be difficulties with the voice when speaking.
- ◆ The voice may sound nasal, harsh or strained.
- ◆ There are different types of dysarthria which occurs from many types of neurological disorders.
- ◆ Dysarthria symptoms can be temporary or long term in nature depending on the neurological disorder present.
- ◆ Treatment involves improving muscle strength and voicing abilities to improve clarity of speech.