



University Hospitals Birmingham
NHS Foundation Trust



Dysphasia

Building healthier lives

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Dysphasia is caused by damage to parts of the brain that process language. This can affect talking, understanding, reading and writing. This can happen due to a stroke, head injury, brain tumour, or other neurological illness.

Receptive dysphasia may result in:

- Difficulty understanding instructions, conversations and questions
- Difficulty reading
- Giving responses unrelated to the question

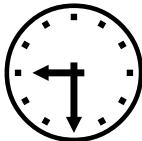
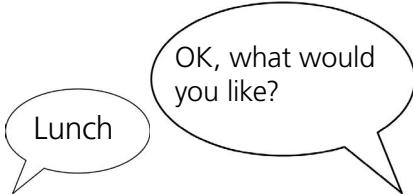
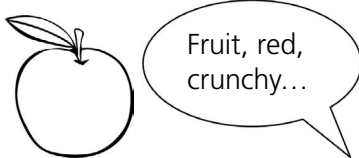
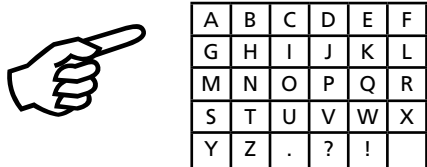



Expressive dysphasia may result in:

- Difficulty finding words
- Difficulty with writing
- Using the wrong word e.g. table instead of chair
- Saying words that are not real e.g. 'fep'
- Having limited spoken language
- Producing 'flowing' sentences that are difficult to follow and don't make sense

Strategies for the listener

- **Minimise distractions** – reduce background noise
- Encourage the person to **take their time**
- Ask the person if they would like you to finish their sentences for them, and avoid this if they don't want you to
- **Be honest** if you don't understand - encourage them to try again
- If you know what they are trying to say, **give the person the first sound** of the word or provide a category e.g. 'you cook with it'
- **Offer choices** and ask yes/no questions
- If you did not understand something, **ask clarifying questions**, e.g. "were you telling me about..."
- Let them know which part you **did** understand and ask them to try the rest again
- **Encourage using strategies** from this leaflet or a speech and language therapist

Strategies for the person with dysphasia

<ul style="list-style-type: none">Take your time																															
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Say key words first																															
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Try describing the word																															
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Use gesture and communication aids	 <table data-bbox="787 758 1027 925"><tr><td>A</td><td>B</td><td>C</td><td>D</td><td>E</td><td>F</td></tr><tr><td>G</td><td>H</td><td>I</td><td>J</td><td>K</td><td>L</td></tr><tr><td>M</td><td>N</td><td>O</td><td>P</td><td>Q</td><td>R</td></tr><tr><td>S</td><td>T</td><td>U</td><td>V</td><td>W</td><td>X</td></tr><tr><td>Y</td><td>Z</td><td>.</td><td>?</td><td>!</td><td></td></tr></table>	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z	.	?	!	
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<ul style="list-style-type: none">Use writing or drawing to get your message across																															
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Let others know how to help																															
<ul style="list-style-type: none">If becoming frustrated, take a break and try again later																															

These are general strategies – a speech and language therapist can provide individual advice.

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If the person has receptive dysphasia, when speaking to them:

- **Speak in shorter sentences** at a steady pace
- **Try not to change topics** suddenly – say a key word first
- **Use gesture** and point to objects in your immediate environment
- **Write key words down or use pictures**
- **Offer processing time** after speaking, and if not understood, **shorten** the phrase and **repeat** it

How did we do? 😊 😐 😞

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Accessibility

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Speech and Language Therapy Services

Queen Elizabeth Hospital Birmingham
Mindelsohn Way, Edgbaston, Birmingham, B15 2GW
Telephone: 0121 371 3483
