

Fact Sheet: Aphasia

What is Aphasia?

Aphasia is an acquired language difficulty, which can be **caused by stroke, traumatic brain injury or other damage to the brain.**

Aphasia may affect a person's ability to:

- **Speak** – finding words you want to say or being able to speak in full sentences.
- **Understand** – difficulty understanding others, or difficulty understanding when there is background noise.
- **Read** – understanding what you have read or being able to read aloud.
- **Write** – writing, spelling or copying words, and texting or typing.
- **Use numbers** – reading or writing numbers, reading time or dates, completing maths equations, dialling numbers on a phone or using money.



Aphasia affects a person's ability to communicate, it **does not affect their intelligence.**

What can I do to help myself?

- **Keep communicating in any way** you can.
- If you can talk:
 - Say one word at a time.
 - Talk slower.

- You can also use other ways to get your message across:
 - Body actions/gesture
 - **Point** to an object, person, photo, or picture
 - **Draw** it or **write** it down



Ways to help people with aphasia?

- Find a **quiet place to talk and talk 1:1.**
- **Give time** to process information and form a response.
- **Be patient.**
- **Check your understanding** – sometimes people with aphasia will say a word they don't mean.
- **Accept all communication** attempts.
- Support them to use **other forms of communication – gesture, writing, visuals, etc.**

How a speech pathologist can help

- Help you find the best ways to keep communicating.
- Help family and friends to communicate with you.

For more information contact Benalla Health on (03) 5761 4500 to speak to a speech pathologist.