

Aphasia



Communication and swallowing difficulties can have a negative impact on a person's confidence when he/she is socialising and participating in daily activities. The Speech Therapy department provides assessment, diagnosis, and therapy services for inpatients and outpatients with speech, language, voice and swallowing disorders.

What is aphasia?

Aphasia is a language disorder that can be caused by stroke, head injury, tumours and seizures. It affects a person's ability to communicate.

People with aphasia can have difficulty in the following areas:

- **Reading:** people with aphasia may have trouble reading books or even single words.
- **Speaking:** they may have problems forming sentences grammatically. They may also use incorrect words or long explanations. Making telephone calls can pose some difficulty. Some may find it hard to remember people's names.
- **Understanding language:** they may find it hard to understand spoken words, phrases and sentences, including humour or sarcasm. They may have trouble following a conversation, especially in groups or in noisy environments.
- **Writing and spelling:** writing letters and filling out forms can be challenging.

How can speech therapy help?

There is no medicine or surgery to treat aphasia. In some cases, the brain heals naturally and patients with aphasia recover spontaneously without treatment. For most people with aphasia, speech-language therapy is essential to improve communication. A speech therapist will help to identify the specific needs of the patient and teach him/her strategies to communicate more effectively.



Points to note:

- The common cause of aphasia is stroke
- Aphasia does not affect intelligence
- The severity of aphasia depends on the amount and location of the damage to the brain
- Understanding and speaking a language may be impaired to different levels in the same person

Communication strategies

- Ask yes/no questions so the person can answer by nodding or shaking his/her head
- Emphasise or write down key words
- Ensure you have the person's attention
- Give the person extra time to respond
- Let the person know if you did not understand his/her message
- Point and/or use gestures
- Reduce any background noise
- Repeat yourself if the person did not understand you
- Speak slowly
- Talk about one topic at a time
- Take breaks as listening and speaking can be tiring for a person with aphasia
- Use short sentences
- When in groups, make sure that only one person speaks at a time

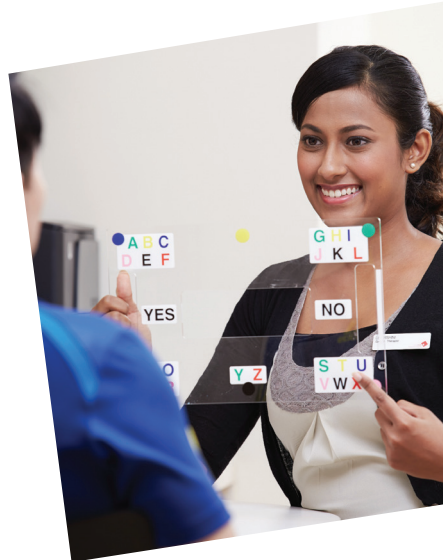
Alternative methods of communication (AAC)

In some cases, aphasia can cause so much difficulty with speaking that a speech therapist may suggest an alternative method of communication (AAC).

There are many different types of AAC, ranging from basic to technology-based types. These include:

- A picture communication board, consisting of common and functional items, so the person with aphasia can point to the relevant pictures
- Applications in smartphones or tablets that can be used to spell words quickly
- Pen and paper, or with an alphabet board
- Relevant pictures stored in smartphones or tablets

AACs are tailored to individual usage and not all methods are suitable for everyone. A speech therapist will explore options with each person to determine the best method.



For more information

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General enquiries: 6716 2000 Fax: 6716 5500

www.juronghealth.com.sg

Clinical and appointment line hours (closed on Sundays and public holidays)

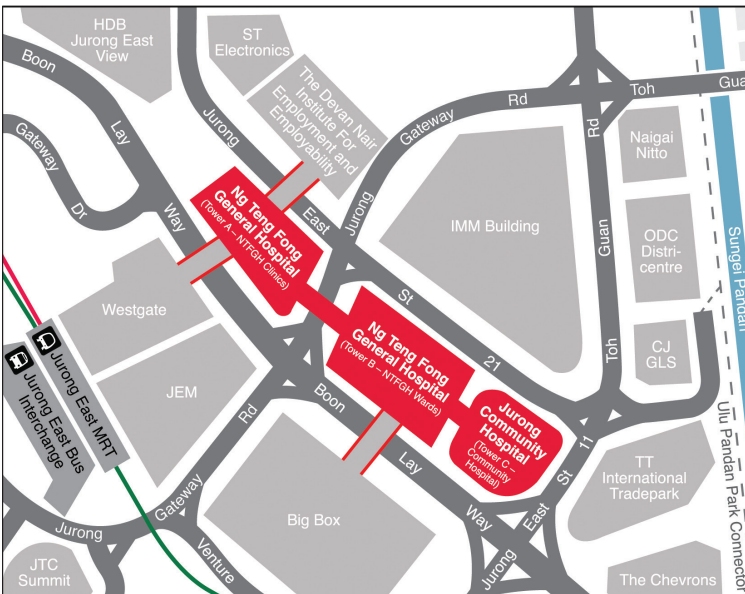
For appointments, please call 6716 2222

Monday - Friday 8.00am - 5.30pm, Saturday 8.00am - 12.30pm

For dental appointments, please call 6716 2233

Monday - Thursday 8.00am - 5.30pm, Friday 8.00am - 5.00pm

Getting there



By train

Jurong East MRT Station

By bus

From Jurong East Bus Interchange

SBS 51, 52, 66, 78, 79, 97, 97e, 98, 98M, 105, 143, 143M,

160, 183, 197, 333, 334, 335, 506

Along Boon Lay Way

SBS 99, Private bus service 625

Disclaimer:

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