

When you have trouble understanding what you are reading ...

- Make a habit of reading the newspaper or magazines. These types of documents are easier to read because of the titles and pictures they contain.
- Read your mail with someone you trust.

When you have difficulty writing ...

- Make a rough copy of your texts and make all the necessary corrections on a final copy.
- When writing a letter, greeting card, or check, ask someone you trust to correct you.



For information, support and activities

Heart and Stroke Foundation

 1 888-473-4636

 www.heartandstroke.ca/services-and-resources/aphasia-services

Alzheimer Society Canada

 416 488-8772

 info@alzheimer.ca

 <https://alzheimer.ca/en>

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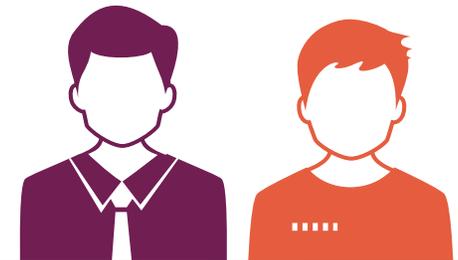
Comité des usagers

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Progressive Communication Difficulties



Your speech therapist : _____

 _____
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Advice for Patients

Some people affected by neurological diseases have difficulty communicating. They may have difficulty to speak, to understand what is said to them, to read or to write.

For example:

- They might have word-finding difficulties.
- They might struggle to get certain words out correctly (e.g. I went to Ton-Toro-Toronto).
- They might have difficulty understanding long sentences.
- They might have difficulties to read or to write.

We talk about progressive difficulties when the difficulties tend to get worst over time.

To make communication more efficient

- In front of **new people**, explain that you have a condition that affects your language. In addition to relaxing the atmosphere, people will be more understanding and tolerant. A personalized “I am an aphasic person” card may be given to you by your speech-language therapist.
- Be clear with your relatives and friends on **your communication preferences**. Do you want them to finish your sentences or try to guess your message? Do you want them to act as translators when you talk to other people? Or that they only step in when you ask them to? Etc.
- Make sure you pick a **good time** for the important conversations. Ideally, you should be in good physical shape, have plenty of time, and be in a quiet place.
- Favor a small group of two or three people for discussions (large group conversations are more difficult to follow).
- Use an answering machine to facilitate your **telephone conversations**. This will allow you to call the person back at a time that suits you (e.g. when you are rested)

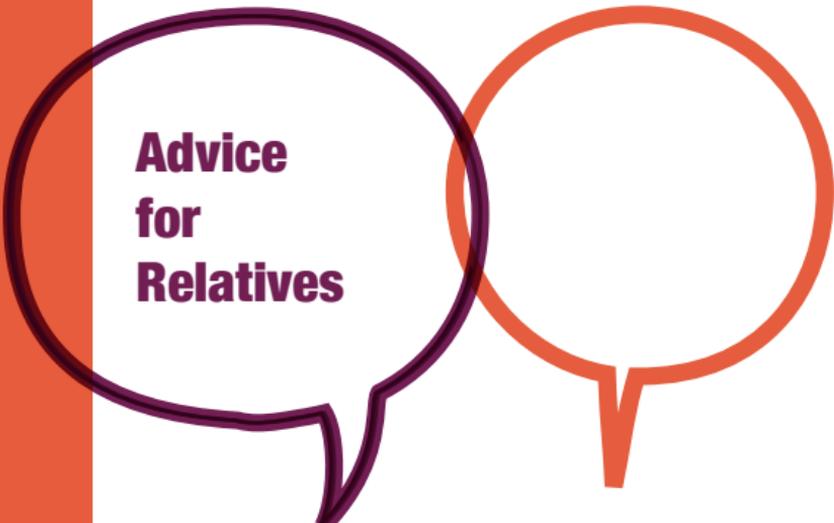
When you have trouble understanding what you're being told ...

- Don't pretend you understand.
- Repeat what you understood from the message and let the other person complete it (e.g. *«If I understood correctly, Robert invited his sister to dinner, but something happened ...»*).

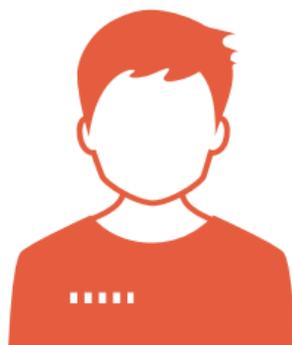
When you have difficulty expressing yourself clearly ...

- *Use a synonym* (e.g. Use the word «*spouse*» if you can't say the word «*wife*»).
- **Describe what you are talking about** (e.g. If you cannot say the word «*doctor*», you can say: *«You know the person I come to see at the hospital, the one who treats patients...»*).
- **Make gestures or point** at the object you are talking about.
- Before an important appointment, for example with the doctor, **write down your questions** so that nothing is forgotten.

Progressive Communication Difficulties



**Advice
for
Relatives**



References

- Brochure from MSSS Québec « Vous connaissez une personne aphasique? »
- Summary from the 2012 Conference of the Cognitive Neurology and Alzheimer's Disease Center of Northwestern University
- PPA diagnostic criteria from Neary & al. (1998) and Gorno-Tempini & al. (2011)
- « L'aphasie et la communication » from Gaudreau, Grégoire, Lemieux et Michaud, directed by Josée Allaire, MOA and Joël Macoir, Ph.D. (2005).



Advice for Relatives

- **Avoid speaking loudly.** Just because a person has difficulty understanding does not mean that they are deaf.
- **Avoid all infantilizing behaviors.** Remember, this is a mature and intelligent person you are talking to.
- **Make sure to mention the topic** of the conversation before starting the discussion.
- **Keep sentences short.**
- **Give your relative time to express himself/herself.** Pay attention to facial expressions, voice tone and gestures. These can give you information.
- **Tolerate mistakes.** In the end, the important is that the message is understood.
- Tell your relative that you don't understand as soon as this happens. Never pretend that you understand.