

Communication



Making Communication A Success

Communication problems are common after a stroke and with other conditions that affect the brain.

Communication can include difficulty with:

- talking
- understanding
- reading
- writing



How might you feel if you couldn't communicate?

You might experience:

- loneliness
- sadness, depression
- low self-esteem
- misunderstandings, frustration and anger

Did you know:

There are two types of communication problems:

- Receptive - trouble taking messages **IN** through listening or reading
- Expressive – trouble getting messages **OUT** through talking or writing

People with communication problems:

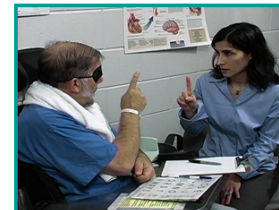
- do not lose their intelligence or ability to make decisions
- may understand even if they cannot talk
- may have physical or emotional outbursts due to frustration



Helping Paul Communicate



DON'T	DO
Raise your voice. Do not assume the person has a hearing problem.	Use short, simple sentences in a normal tone of voice.
Stand over a seated person.	Position yourself at eye-level.
Frown, cross your arms, or use non-verbal cues that indicate frustration or impatience.	Use positive facial expressions and body language to support your message.
Ask open-ended questions.	Ask simple yes/no questions (e.g., "Would you like orange juice?").
Rush communication.	Be patient. Allow time for a response.
Jump into a topic or move quickly from one topic to another. Don't ask many unrelated questions.	Make each individual topic clear and all topic changes clear (e.g., "Now, let's talk about your pills"). Then get more specific with questions.
Feel like there are no options if words don't work.	Print key words, use pictures, specific gestures, simple drawings, and facial expressions.
Get frustrated with the person.	Acknowledge the difficulty, take a break and come back later (e.g., "Can we please try again later?").
Forget to acknowledge the person's intelligence.	Use phrases like: "I know you know".
Assume that you understood the message.	Always confirm and summarize the response (e.g., "Yes, you want to go to the bathroom.").



Tips for Successful Communication

Important tips to remember:

- ensure hearing aids and glasses are in place
- reduce noise & distractions (e.g., turn off TV)
- ensure adequate lighting
- one person should speak at a time



MESSAGE IN

MESSAGE OUT

- Position face-to-face
- Use gestures & facial expressions
- Establish topic
- One topic at a time
- Use short sentences
- Print key words
- Use simple drawings & pictures
- Watch for body language to ensure understanding
- Ask YES/NO questions

- Allow extra time
- Use support & encouragement
- Identify general topic first
- Encourage gestures & pointing
- Ask YES/NO questions
- Use picture/word boards
- Encourage writing
- Verify the message

For More Information Go To: Heart & Stroke Foundation of Canada (2015) Taking Action for Optimal Community and Long Term Stroke Care (TACLS) [Link](#)

STROKE NETWORK
of Southeastern Ontario