

Fluent aphasia

What is it?

Aphasia is a problem with language after a stroke, or other brain injury, that makes it difficult to talk.

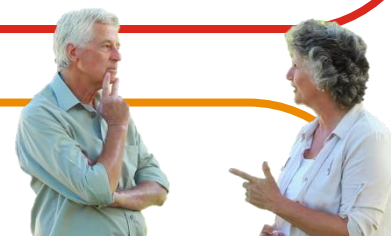
A person with fluent aphasia usually has **difficulties understanding**, even for single words or simple sentences. This is because in this type of aphasia, individuals have damage in brain areas that are important for processing the meaning of words and spoken language.



What does it look like?

Fluent aphasia is when you're able to **speak easily and use long sentences**, but what you say does **not always make sense**. Some common difficulties seen are:

- **Frustration** when people don't understand as the person doesn't realise they are saying anything wrong.
- They may use some words that don't make sense (**nonsense words**), like "shaley" for tired.
- **Errors in the way real words** come out, so they can be hard to understand – like "prace" for chase or "starnker" for dancer.





- They may speak out of turn, talk over others or have trouble being quiet when others take a turn.
- Have **increased difficulties understanding** others if there is background noise or if different people are talking in a group.

It can affect all areas of language:

- Reading comprehension may be impaired, e.g. able to read newspaper headlines, but not understand the rest of the text.
- Writing may be impaired, e.g. able to write but unable to read back what they've written.



How can I support them?

Supporting their **listening**:

- Make sure you have the person's attention **before** speaking
- Give **plenty of time** to allow them to process the information – slow your speech a little when talking and pause frequently for them to "catch up".
- Give information in **small chunks**, e.g. "do you want to go the living room?"
- If the person doesn't respond or looks as though they have not understood, ask if they would like you to **repeat** it.
- Use **gesture** alongside your speech, for example say "Do you want to go to the living room?" and point down the corridor.
- Write down **key words** while speaking, e.g. 'living room'

Supporting their **talking**:

- If part of the sentence doesn't make sense, **repeat back** the bit you understood and see if they can complete the sentence, e.g. "You said you were..."
- If they use a word that sounds like a real word like "starnker" for dancer, repeat what they have said back using the right word e.g "You watched the dancer".
- If a nonsense word is used, repeat the sentence back to her with the nonsense word, e.g. "It's on the *waggle?!*". This may help for them to realise when this is happening, and you can then support her to try again.
- Use things in the room as "**props**" to help the conversation, e.g. look at a newspaper together.
- Encourage **gesture and pointing** to get the message across if the right words aren't coming out. Ask if they can show you the thing they are talking about.