

Can You Hear It?

Can You Say It?



**Communication
Nation**

LIVE IT!

MAY IS SPEECH AND HEARING MONTH!

Get the Facts on...

Adult Communication Disorders



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Adult Communication Disorders

The ability to communicate is our most human characteristic. Speaking, understanding, and hearing are essential skills in our society. One out of ten Canadians suffers from a speech or hearing disorder. These people encounter many educational, social, psychological, emotional and vocational issues.

Early detection is vital.

Common Types of Adult Communication Disorders

Aphasia (pronounced AH·FAY·SIA)

A language disorder due to brain damage or disease resulting in difficulty in formulating, expressing, and/or understanding language.

Apraxia (pronounced A·PRAX·SIA)

A speech programming disorder which makes words and sentences sound jumbled or meaningless.

Dysarthria (pronounced DIS·AR·THREE·AH)

A group of speech disorders resulting from paralysis, weakness, or lack of coordination of the muscles required for speech.

Dysphagia (pronounced DIS·FAY·JAH)

Swallowing disorders are common with all of the above and are also treated by speech-language pathologists.

Types of Speech Disorders

Articulation disorders occur when a person cannot correctly produce one or more sounds. This may occur as a result of delayed development, poor muscle control, cleft lip/palate, hearing impairment, or learning disabilities. Articulation errors include substitutions of sounds (eg. Wabbit for Rabbit), omissions (eg. Kip for skip) and distortions (eg. Shlip for sip). Errors of many sounds that form patterns are described as **phonological disorders**. In adults, articulation can become impaired as a result of neurological damage such as from a stroke or head injury and is termed a **motor speech disorder**.

Voice disorders include inappropriate pitch, loudness, quality or total loss of voice. Voice problems may result from damage to the vocal cords because of surgery, disease or yelling (vocal abuse), or from such conditions as cleft palate, cerebral palsy or hearing impairment.

Fluency disorders or stuttering is a disruption in the normal flow or rhythm of speech. Characteristics of stuttering may include repetitions of sounds, syllables, words or phrases; hesitations; prolongations and interjections. Stuttering affects 1% of the population. Men are 4 times more likely to stutter than women. The effects of stuttering on feelings, beliefs, self-concept, and social interactions are often overlooked. Stuttering is a social-emotional problem as well as a speech problem.

