Does your family member have Aphasia?

What to look for...
- He/She can’t speak, or their words don’t make sense
- You aren’t sure if he/she understands you
- He/She may not say ‘Yes’/‘No’ correctly, even if they know what they want

Aphasia may get better over time. Even if it does not, we know people can live successfully with Aphasia.

What YOU can do:
- Ask a speech-language pathologist (SLP) about aphasia
- Show your family member you understand that he/she may ‘know more than they can say’
- Keep talking with him/her. Include them in conversation. Encourage others to do that too

Does your Family Member have APHASIA?

What to look for and What you can do

- Your family member may ‘know more than they can say’!

Life’s a Conversation.
COMMUNICATION TIPS:

Help them feel respected:
- Speak to him/her directly, naturally, and kindly
- Make eye contact
- Don’t shout. Be patient
- Use an adult tone of voice
- If you need to speak on their behalf, ask him/her if it’s OK
- Acknowledge their frustration
- Say/show, “I know you know!”

GETTING THE MESSAGE OUT...
Help him/her communicate:
- Ask yes/no questions, one at a time
- Give him/her time to answer
- Don’t complete their sentences (unless asked)
- Give him/her choices to point to (e.g. ‘YES’ / ‘NO’ / ‘?’)
- See if their face/actions are saying something
- If they say the wrong word, imagine what they may be trying to say

Double-check:
- Check what you think they have told you. (Say it again, or sum it up)
- Ask if they have more to tell you, before moving on
- Sometimes, you can ask, “Should we take a break? Can we try again later?”

COMMUNICATION TIPS:

Help him/her understand you:
- Speak clearly & slowly. Pause frequently
- Use short sentences
- Write large key words
- Draw/point to pictures/things
- Use your hands + face to show what you mean
- One topic at a time
- Let him/her see your lips

FOR MORE INFORMATION:
Aphasia Institute
(416) 226-3636
www.aphasia.ca

QUICK TIPS*:
A: ask simple + direct questions
P: provide many ways to help talk
H: help communicate, if asked
A: acknowledge their frustration
S: speak clearly, slowly, and pause
I: if you don’t understand, say so
A: allow extra time

*Adapted from National Aphasia Association – “The Aphasia Caregiver Guide”

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