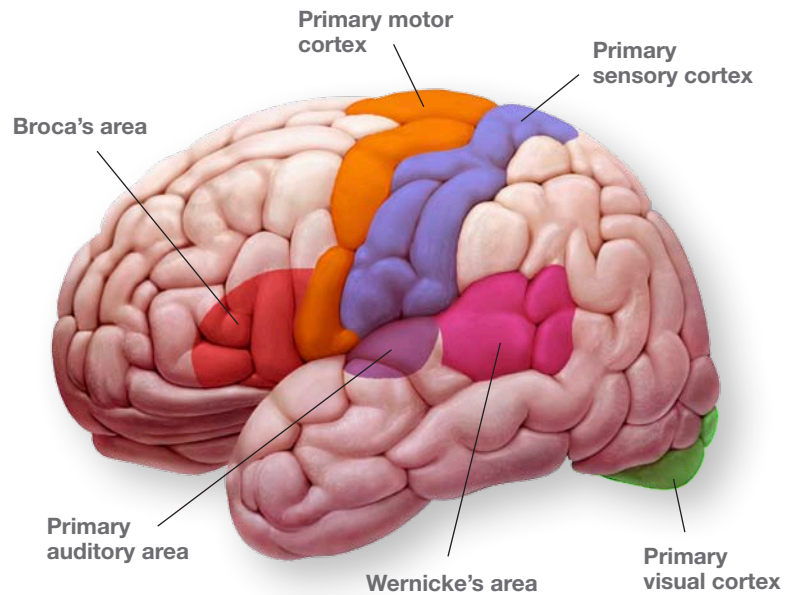




let's talk about

# Stroke and Aphasia

Aphasia is a language disorder that affects the ability to communicate. It's most often caused by strokes that occur in areas of the brain that control speech and language.



Certain areas of the brain (usually in the left side of the brain) influence one's ability to communicate and understand language. When a stroke occurs in one of these areas, it may result in aphasia.

## What are the effects of aphasia?

Aphasia does not affect intelligence. Stroke survivors remain mentally alert, even though their speech may be jumbled, fragmented or impossible to understand. Some survivors continue to have:

- Trouble speaking, like “getting the words out”
- Trouble finding words
- Problems understanding what others say
- Problems with reading, writing or math
- Inability to process long words and infrequently used words

## How does it feel to have aphasia?

People with aphasia are often frustrated and confused because they can't speak as well or understand things the way they did before their stroke. They may act differently because of changes in their brain. Imagine looking at the headlines of the morning newspaper and not being able to recognize the words. Or think about trying to say “put the car in the garage” and it comes out “put the train in the house” or “widdle tee car ung

sender plissen.” Thousands of alert, intelligent men and women are suddenly plunged into a world of jumbled communication because of aphasia.

## Are there different types of aphasia?

Yes, there are several forms of aphasia. They include:

- **Global aphasia** — People with this aphasia may be completely unable to speak, name objects, repeat phrases or follow commands.
- **Broca's aphasia** — The person knows what they want to say, but can't find the right words (can't get the words out).
- **Wernicke's aphasia** — A person with this aphasia can seldom understand what's being said or control what they're saying.

## How can family and friends help?

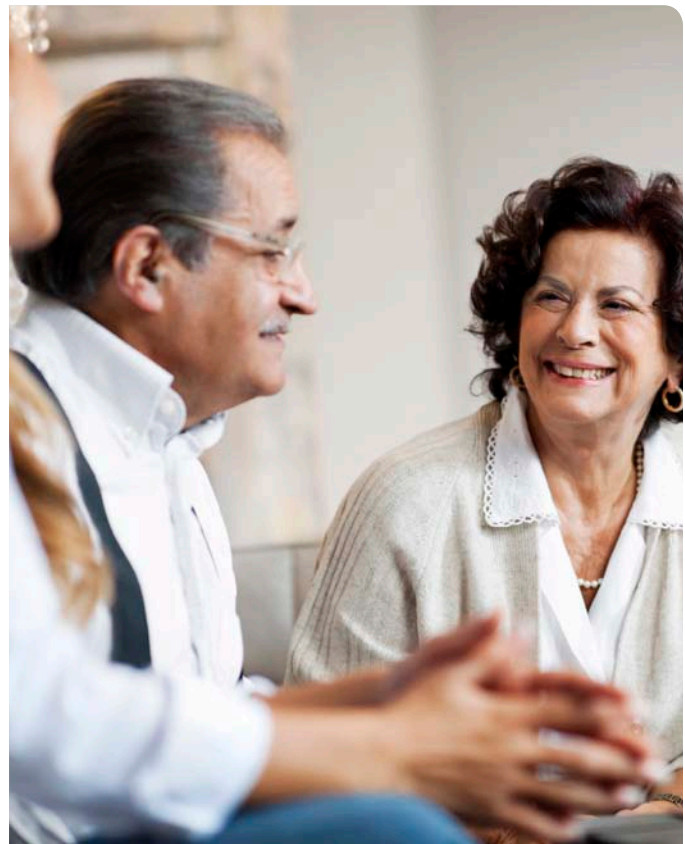
The stroke survivor and their family members will need the help and support of a doctor, counselor and speech pathologist. It's a good idea for family and friends to:

- Be open about the problem so people can understand.

(continued)



- Always assume that the stroke survivor can hear. Check understanding with yes/no questions.
- Set up a daily routine for the person with aphasia that includes rest and time to practice skills.
- Use sentences that are short and to the point.
- Keep the noise level down and stand where the survivor can see you.
- Remember to treat the stroke survivor as an adult and let him or her share in decision-making. No one likes to be ignored. Include the survivor in your conversation.
- Help the stroke survivor cope with feelings of frustration and depression.
- Be patient with the person with aphasia. Give them the time they need to try to speak and get their point across to you. This not only respects their dignity, but makes it less stressful for them when communicating.



## HOW CAN I LEARN MORE?

- 1** Talk to your doctor, nurse or other healthcare professionals. Ask about other stroke topics.
- 2** Call **1-888-4-STROKE** (1-888-478-7653) or visit us at **StrokeAssociation.org** to learn more about stroke.
- 3** Call the American Stroke Association's "Warmline" at **1-888-4-STROKE** (1-888-478-7653), and:
  - Sign up for *Stroke Connection*, a free magazine for stroke survivors and caregivers.
  - Talk to other stroke survivors and caregivers and find local support groups.

## Do you have questions for the doctor or nurse?

Take a few minutes to write your questions for the next time you see your healthcare provider.

For example:

**How long will I need therapy?**

**Will my aphasia go away?**

**How can I find a stroke or aphasia support group?**

## My Questions:

We have many other fact sheets to help you make healthier choices to reduce your risk, manage disease or care for a loved one. Visit [strokeassociation.org/letstalkaboutstroke](http://strokeassociation.org/letstalkaboutstroke) to learn more.

**Knowledge is power, so Learn and Live!**