

## Identify the Signs: Speech and Language Disorders in Adults



**Note:** If you or someone you know are experiencing any of these signs, especially for the first time, seek out the services of your medical provider and an ASHA-certified speech-language pathologist.

- Uses **slurred** or **slowed rate** of speech
- Has problems **coordinating mouth** or **speech movements**
- Struggles to **get out sounds** or words correctly
- Has trouble **thinking of the words** they want to say
- Has **problems expressing** what they want or need
- Speaks in short, **fragmented phrases**
- Says words in the **wrong order**
- Has trouble **following directions** or conversations
- Has **difficulty understanding** what others say
- Has **new trouble reading, writing, spelling, or using numbers**



Find more signs, and how you can connect with help, at <https://IdentifytheSigns.org>.

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### What Communication Partners Can Do

- Give the person **time to communicate** (rather than guessing or trying to finish their sentences).
- Ask the person **what helps them** communicate.
- Focus on **understanding a person's message** rather than stopping conversation to correct a word or pronunciation.
- Use **other forms of communication** when needed (e.g., gestures, pen and paper, text to talk, augmentative and alternative communication devices).
- Let the person know **when you have trouble understanding** them. Avoid pretending to understand.
- Break down **directions into small, clear steps**. Repeat directions or key information as needed.
- Give **choices instead of asking an open-ended question**. For example, "Do you want coffee or juice?" instead of "What do you want to drink?"
- Pause to **let the other person think** about what you've said.
- Check with the person **to make sure that they understand you**.



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