



Speech Language Therapy

A Speech Language Therapist is trained in the area of swallowing and in the development of communication speech, and language. The reason they are trained in both these areas is many of the same muscles, nerves and body parts are used in both communication and swallowing.

Communication is a complex activity that involves us understanding and being understood and includes:

- non-verbal communication
 - facial expression
 - gestures/sign language
 - body language
 - symbols (writing, drawing picture)
 - technology
- verbal communication speech
- language or understanding words and sentences
- social rules
 - considering others people's views
 - recognising non verbal clues
 - taking turns, eye contact, personal space
 - staying on topic
 - adapting communication for different situations and audiences.



Swallowing or dysphagia is a common consequence of many health conditions, head and neck surgery and ageing, affecting over 20% of over 50 year olds. Signs of swallowing problems may include:

- coughing while eating or drinking
- choking while eating and drinking
- repeated chest infections
- taking longer to eat or drink
- reduced appetite
- unplanned weight loss
- problems eating/drinking in public
- food sticking in your throat
- difficulty chewing tough foods
- dribbling
- food/fluid coming out of your nose
- spilling food from mouth while eating
- wet or gurgly sounding voice after eating or drinking
- problems with drinking enough fluid



What does a Speech Language Therapist do?

Communication

Speech Language Therapists give practical solutions to improve your communication, such as:

- Ways to use and/or enhance your current communication skills
- Exercise to help all areas of speech, language and voice
- Use of gestures, signs, symbols and/or technology

With you, and those supporting you, they will:

- Tailor a plan for you and help you put it into action
- Review plan if required
- Recommend equipment and its funding



Swallowing (Dysphagia)

Speech Language Therapists will give practical solutions to improve your eating and drinking, such as:

- swallowing exercises
- the best position to eat and drink
- advice on special cutlery or cups to make eating and drinking easier
- advice on food and fluids and how to make them so they are safe to swallow
- advice on the ways to feed when eating and drinking is no longer safe

With you, and those supporting you, they will:

- tailor a plan for you and help you put it into action
- review plan if required
- recommend equipment and its funding



Who does a Speech Language Therapist work with?

Adults and children with a variety of communication and or swallowing difficulties.

Conditions that may require help from a Speech Language Therapist include:

Developmental

- Learning (Intellectual) Disability
- Developmental Delay
- Chromosomal Disorders eg Down Syndrome
- Dyspraxia
- Autism
- Cerebral Palsy
- Reading and writing difficulties

Health and wellbeing

- Deafness/hearing impairment
- Ageing
- Oral cancer
- Stuttering/fluency

Neurological

- Stroke (CVA)
- Parkinson's
- Multiple Sclerosis (MS)
- Dementia
- Motor Neurone Disease
- Huntington's
- Muscular Dystrophy
- Brain/head injuries
- Specific language impairment
- Stuttering
- Abnormalities of head or neck

How does a Speech Language Therapist work?

The way in a Speech Language Therapist works is determined by the individual needs of the client and may include one or a combination of the following approaches.

Consultation and Monitoring

Consultation is an effective way of working with a person to improve their communication wherever they live, work play or learn. Therapists work together with the Significant Others, who are in the best position to carry out ideas on a day- to-day basis.

The Speech Language Therapist can provide support and regular review.

Direct/Hands On Intervention

The therapist carries out a programme on a regular basis, in a one-to-one or group setting.

Transdisciplinary Team Approach

People we work with may require support from a range of therapists including occupational therapists, physiotherapists, dietitian, and music therapists. At Therapy Professionals Ltd we work within a transdisciplinary team and are able to provide support one another's programmes when appropriate.

If you think you or someone you know needs a speech language therapist Therapy Professionals Ltd's friendly Speech Language Therapist can help, just contact us:

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