

SPEECH LANGUAGE PATHOLOGY



Speech-Language Pathology is a treatment that helps improve speech and language skills. Speech-Language Pathology help with language skills, voice and sound production, comprehension, cognitive-communication, fluency, oral/feeding/swallowing skills, clarity, and expression.

DIAGNOSIS

- ▶ Case History: Medical status, education, socioeconomic, cultural, and linguistic backgrounds and information from teachers and other related service providers
- ▶ Patient and family interview
- ▶ Review of auditory, visual, motor, and cognitive status
- ▶ Standardized and/or non-standardized measures of specific aspects of speech, spoken and non-spoken language, cognitive-communication, and swallowing function, including observations, and analysis of work samples
- ▶ Identification of potential for effective intervention strategies and compensations
- ▶ Selection of standardized measures for speech, language, cognitive-communication, and/or swallowing assessment with consideration for documented ecological validity, and cultural sensitivity
- ▶ Follow-up services to monitor communication and swallowing status and ensure appropriate intervention and support for individuals with identified speech, language, cognitive-communication, and/or swallowing disorders

WHAT ARE BENEFITS OF SPEECH THERAPY?

- ▶ Improves self-esteem
- ▶ Increase independence
- ▶ Improved ability to comprehend and express ideas, thoughts and feelings
- ▶ School readiness for children
- ▶ Enhanced vocal quality
- ▶ Helps with language and social skills
- ▶ Better swallowing function

WHAT HAPPENS DURING SPEECH THERAPY?

- ▶ Speech therapy depends on several factors, including age and the type of speech disorder. For children, it usually involves play (sequencing activities or language-based board games). For adults, it's focused on improving or rebuilding particular skill sets.
- ▶ The speech-language pathologist will customize an appropriate treatment based on your unique situation.

HOW DO I KNOW IF SPEECH THERAPY IS NECESSARY?

- ▶ When a healthcare provider suspects the need for speech therapy they will recommend some initial screenings. The tests will help determine the underlying cause. For example, when a child has trouble communicating a healthcare provider will recommend additional testing for hearing and speech.

WHAT ARE SPEECH THERAPY TECHNIQUES?

Treatment varies significantly for each person as it depends on the type of speech disorder. Your speech pathologist will develop a detailed plan of care specific to each.

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SPEECH THERAPY TECHNIQUES TO TRY AT HOME FOR CHILDREN

- ▶ Reduce screen time: Research shows that watching too much television can delay language development. The best way to teach a child proper speech is by modeling speech and language to them directly.
- ▶ Be attentive and patient: If your child has a speech disorder, it's important to be patient. Don't push them to get the words out. Make sure your child knows you are there for them, reassure them by telling them, "Take your time, I'm listening." Be sure to give them your undivided attention while they communicate with you.
- ▶ Play games with your child: Board games that include guessing objects, describing objects or asking questions.
- ▶ Be a good speech model: Use simple grammatically correct speech that's easy for the child to imitate. Try to label shapes, colors, clothing items, and body parts. Wait for the child to respond. Give them time. When they do repeat the same sound or word, be sure to reassure them.
- ▶ Read to your child: Reading to your child is a wonderful way of developing their speech and language skills. If they're old enough to read, let them read back to you. If they're too young to read the words, let them explain what they see in the pictures. Have your child point to the pictures that you name for them, or have them name pictures you point to.

SPEECH THERAPY TECHNIQUES TO TRY AT HOME FOR ADULTS

- ▶ Oral Motor Therapy: Oral motor therapy consists of exercise routines to strengthen the muscles in and around the mouth. This helps with focus control of speech.
- ▶ Tongue exercises: Stick your tongue out, hold for two seconds, then bring it back in. Repeat this process several times. You can also try this same exercise, but move your tongue to each corner of your mouth for two seconds. Finally, move your tongue up and down in the same fashion. These exercises help train your tongue to move in coordinated patterns.
- ▶ Smile: Smile in front of a mirror to help improve motor skills. Smile. Relax. Smile again. Repeat this process several times.
- ▶ Puckering lips: Try puckering your lips, then relaxing. This helps control the movement of the mouth.
- ▶ Reading out loud: If your speech disorder prevents you from moving your mouth and tongue properly, reading out loud can be excellent practice. Start out with a few small sentences and work your way up from there.
- ▶ Games: Memory games, word searches, and crossword puzzles can help maintain cognitive function and improve thinking skills.