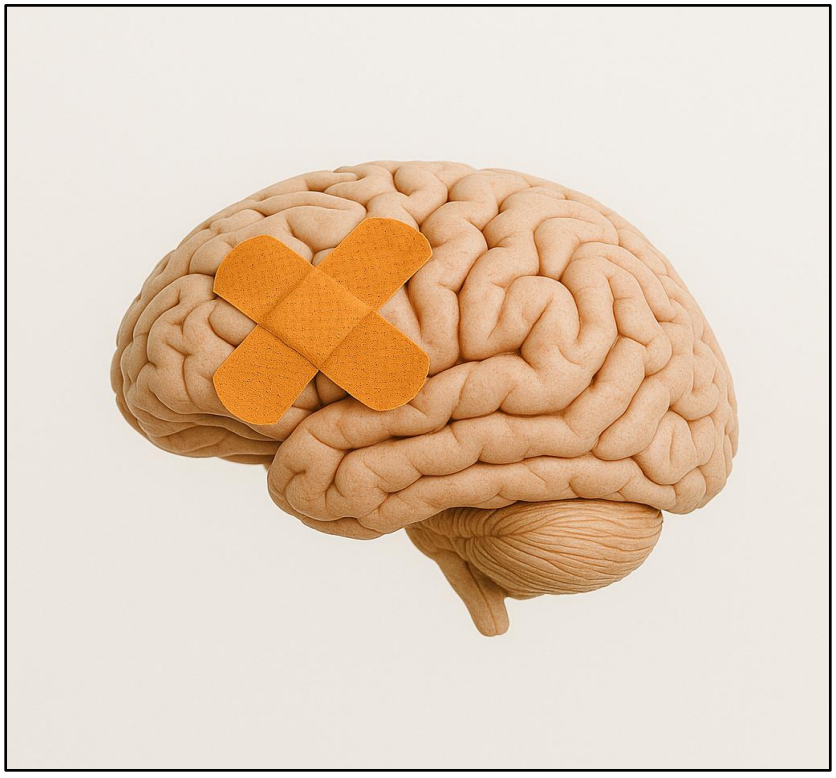
Aphasia Therapy

Sheltering Arms Institute
A collaboration with VCU Health

Your brain can **heal and change** after a stroke or a brain injury.



Healing Brain

Speech therapy helps your brain heal by giving the brain opportunities to **practice communicating**.

Speech therapy can help you get better at **communicating**.

You will work with a **speech-language pathologist (SLP).**



Speech Therapy

SLPs are **therapists** who help people with their **language skills**.

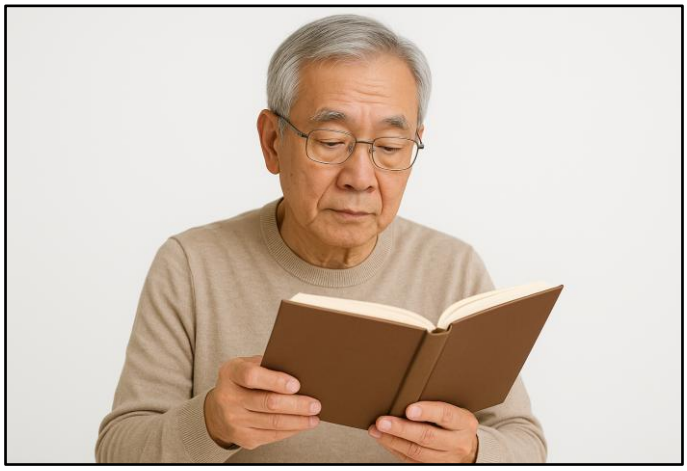
You will practice **speaking**, **understanding**, **reading**, and **writing**.



Speaking



Understanding



Reading



Writing

Your SLP might **give you hints** to help you say the **right word**.



Giving hints

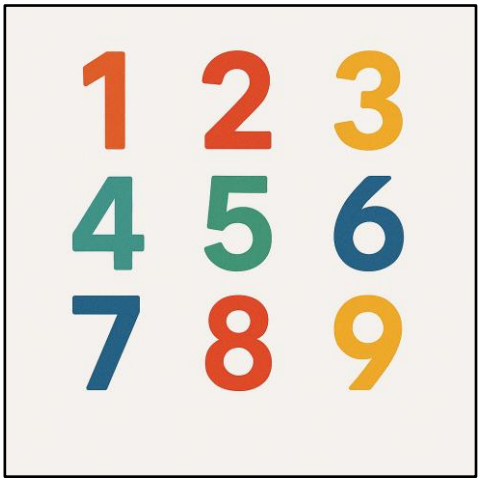
- You might **sing songs** or **say words** that are **easy** and **familiar**.
- These can be easier to **start** with since you **already know them well**.



Happy Birthday



ABC's



Counting



Row Your Boat

Your SLP might **ask you questions** that **seem too easy** or like they are **for kids.**



Kids

That's okay!

- They **know you know the answer**, even if its **hard** for you **to say it**.
- As you **improve**, the **questions** will **get harder**.

You may also practice **other ways to communicate** your wants and needs.



Pointing



Gestures

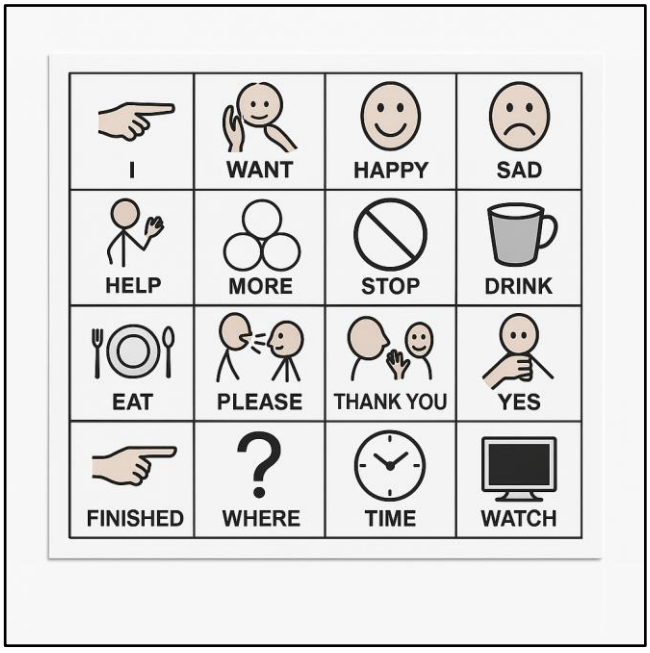


Head movements



Writing or drawing

You may also practice communicating using **different tools** or **technology**.



Communication board



Speech Device

- The **more** you practice, the easier it gets.

- **Repeating** the same exercises **again and again** helps your **brain learn**.

- Practice communicating **often**.

- Practice communicating in **different places** and with **different people**.



Practice talking

- Therapy should **feel** a little **challenging**.
    - Practicing hard tasks helps your brain learn.
    - If it's **too easy**, you may **not improve** as much.
    - Your SLP can help you find the **right level** of difficulty.

- The brain learns when you **practice things** that are **interesting** and **meaningful.**

- This makes therapy more <u>personal</u> and <u>fun</u>.



Hobbies and interests



Favorite music



Pets



Family

Your **friends** and **family** can be a part of your therapy.



Friends



Family

- They can help your SLP learn about **your life** and **interests**.
- Your SLP will **teach them** ways to make communicating with you easier.
- They are great people to **practice talking with!**

Every person's recovery is **different**.

- We don't know **how fast** or **how much** your aphasia **will improve**.

- Aphasia recovery takes:
  - **Time**
  - **Practice**
  - **Support**

- You can get better every day, but it may **feel slow sometimes.**

- Most people make the **most progress** in the **first few months** after their injury.



1st few months

- You can **keep making progress** for a **long time**.

- **Regular, meaningful** communication **practice** and **speech therapy** helps your brain heal.

OpenAI. (2026). *A series of AI-generated photographs related to aphasia* [AI-generated images]. ChatGPT (GPT-5, DALL·E). https://chat.openai.com