

Swallowing Disorders

Damage to the nervous system such as stroke, brain injury, Parkinson's disease, Alzheimer's disease, problems after surgery or tracheostomy, etc. may lead to swallowing problems.

Treatment varies depending on the cause, symptoms and nature of the swallowing problems. Altering food and liquid textures and/or exercises with therapeutic equipment are some of the methods to help patients swallow more effectively.

The speech therapist may conduct comprehensive and objective examinations such as Videofluoroscopic Swallowing Study (VFSS) or Fiberoptic Endoscopic Examination of Swallowing (FEES) with specialist doctors when necessary.

Referral Procedures

Referrals by medical practitioners are welcome.

For enquiries and appointments,
please contact us at:

Department of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation

Speech Therapy Service

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Service Hours (By appointment only)

Monday to Friday: 9:00 am - 5:00 pm
Saturday: 9:00 am - 1:00 pm
Closed on Sundays and Public Holidays

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物理醫學及復康科部 Department of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation



養和醫院
Hong Kong Sanatorium & Hospital

物理醫學及復康科部
Department of Physical Medicine
and Rehabilitation

Speech Therapy

Speech therapist of the Hospital provides high quality services to help children and adults with communication, speech, language, voice, fluency and swallowing difficulties.

Services are provided to all inpatients and outpatients. Diagnostic assessments will be carried out in order to design appropriate therapy programmes tailored to the needs of each patient. Therapy sessions are conducted on an individual basis.

Who Can Benefit from Our Service?

Adults with:

1. Swallowing difficulty
2. Neurogenic communication problem (e.g. following a stroke or head injury)
3. Voice problem
4. Excision of oral lesion or laryngectomy
5. Fluency problem (stuttering)
6. Articulation problem (e.g. post head and neck surgery, radiation therapy)

Children with:

1. Developmental language disorder/language delay
2. Articulation difficulty
3. Voice problem
4. Fluency problem (stuttering)
5. Swallowing difficulty (cleft lip, cleft palate or development problem)

Causes & Therapy

Developmental Language Disorder/ Language Delay

Global delay, suboptimal language environment, impaired intelligence, social/pragmatic disorder (e.g. autism), hearing impairment, learning disability, etc. are some common causes. In some cases, the cause is unknown.

With language games and activities, children are expected to achieve appropriate expressive and comprehensive language abilities equivalent to their mental age. Training for parents is also provided to facilitate language development of their children.

Articulation Disorders

Major causes are delay in articulation development, incoordination of oral musculatures and inappropriate modelling. Other causes are hearing impairment, post oral surgery or congenital structural problems, etc.

Through articulation exercises, patients can be trained to produce sounds correctly, and apply these changes to their daily lives.

Voice Disorders

Inappropriate use of voice or vocal abuse may lead to voice disorders. Other causes are vocal nodules, vocal polyps, edema or vocal paralysis.

Speech therapist will design a programme for patient on vocal hygiene, including relaxation, breathing and voice exercises.

Fluency Disorders

Fluency disorders are due to psychological, physical or hereditary causes.

Patients will be introduced to therapy/approach that aims to facilitate smooth and fluent speech.

Neurologenic Communication Disorders

Major causes are brain disease or trauma, such as stroke, brain tumour, head injury, Parkinson's disease, etc. Depending on the site and severity, patients have difficulties in understanding, speaking, reading and writing. Communication disorders include aphasia, apraxia and dysarthria.

Exercises will be used to enhance communication ability and strategy, and to strengthen the oral musculature to improve speech clarity. Training for family members will also be provided to facilitate communication. When necessary, alternative communication devices will be used.

