

# Dysarthria

## What is dysarthria?

Dysarthria is difficulty speaking due to weak or damaged speech muscles.

It may be difficult to

- speak at normal speed
- speak loud and clear
- change your pitch or tone
- be understood in a group
- speak in long sentences without losing breath

## What causes dysarthria?

- stroke, head injury, brain tumour or progressive diseases such as Parkinson's disease

## Will my speech get better?

- it is different for each person
- it can depend on the cause of your dysarthria

A speech pathologist can

- give you tips and exercises to improve your speech
- help you communicate better with friends and family

### **Tips for you**

- look at the person you are talking to
- find a quiet place to talk
- speak slowly
- use short sentences
- use gesture
- use pen and paper
- take a breath before you speak
- break up longer words

### **Tips for family and friends**

- encourage the person to use the tips above
- give the person time to speak
- check to make sure you have understood correctly
- don't speak for the person

### **Useful websites**

- National Stroke Foundation: [www.strokefoundation.com.au](http://www.strokefoundation.com.au)

Talk to your speech pathologist for more information.

