

# Treatment for Childhood Apraxia of Speech



Childhood apraxia of speech is a type of speech disorder. A child with this condition has trouble making sounds correctly and consistently. Apraxia is a problem with how the brain sends signals to the muscles used for speech. Childhood apraxia of speech can range from mild to severe. It's not a common condition. It happens more often in boys than in girls.

## Types of treatment

Once a comprehensive medical assessment is completed and apraxia is diagnosed, speech-language therapy is the main treatment. There is no single method that treats apraxia, and speech-language pathologists (SLPs) often use a variety of methods. Speech therapy is tailored to each child. Your child may do exercises, such as:

- Speaking a word as an SLP touches your child's mouth and chin while saying the same word
- Touching their mouth or throat while making sounds
- Repeating syllables, then words and sentences
- Looking in the mirror while practicing speech

A child will often need to start with regular, one-on-one speech therapy. The results of therapy vary for each child. Some children make more progress than others.

In severe cases, children may need to use other ways to express themselves for a while. For example, your child might need to use:

- An informal sign language
- A language notebook with pictures
- A portable computer that writes and talks

Your child may not need to use these tools long-term.

Some children may also be helped by working with other healthcare providers. These may include:

- Occupational therapists
- Developmental pediatricians
- Special education specialists

## Helping your child at home

Family support is a key part of treatment for a child with apraxia of speech. Parents and caregivers can help children to practice their speech. Your child's speech therapist may give you exercises to practice with your child. This can help to improve your child's progress.

You can also help by:

- Not pressuring your child to speak
- Showing patience when your child does want to speak
- Be positive about your child's efforts

- Showing family, friends, and educators how to be supportive of your child's attempts to communicate
- Be generally supportive and encouraging to your child

## To learn more

You can find more information about apraxia from the [Childhood Apraxia of Speech Association of North America at www.apraxia-kids.org](http://www.apraxia-kids.org).

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