

## Stuttering

Stuttering affects the flow and ease of talking.

People who stutter can have a hard time communicating. They might become more anxious about speaking.

We still don't know what causes stuttering. However, we know a lot about what happens when people stutter, how it affects them, and how to help them.

Speech pathologists can help people who stutter.

### About stuttering

Stuttering is when a person's speech is interrupted by unplanned breaks, repetitions and stretches of sounds and words.

People who stutter may look and sound like they are having trouble speaking.

They may make extra movements of their body and face.

Stuttering is relatively common. Around 1 in 100 people stutter.

We don't know what causes stuttering, but it is related to brain activity.

Stuttering is not caused by a specific event, tiredness, anxiety, parenting style, or any type of psychological problem.

It isn't possible to catch stuttering from another person.

Stuttering usually starts in children around 3 to 4 years of age.

It can start suddenly or gradually. It can be very mild through to very severe.

Stuttering can be unpredictable. It can change how it sounds, and when and where it happens.

It may also disappear and then re-appear in young children.

Many young children's stuttering will disappear altogether. Unfortunately, it is impossible to know whose stuttering will fade away permanently, and when that might happen.

### Effects of stuttering

Everyone who stutters has a different experience.

Each person has different goals and needs.

Even very mild stuttering can make some people anxious about speaking. They might want to withdraw from conversations with others.

For other people, frequent stuttering has little impact on their participation and wellbeing.

People who stutter, even when young, can be teased or treated differently.

If this happens, they might develop a fear of speaking. They might avoid having to speak.

Stuttering affects things like reading aloud or giving presentations at school, developing friendships, and choosing careers later in life.

Some adults who stutter don't meet their potential in education and employment because of the built-up impact of stuttering.

### Help for stuttering

You can get help for stuttering.

It's best to talk to a speech pathologist when you first notice it. Don't wait to see if it gets better by itself.

Stuttering in young children responds well to early intervention. Stuttering can be successfully controlled in older children, adolescents and adults too.

Interventions will vary depending on the person and how long they have been stuttering.

In Australia, most interventions directly target the stuttering.

You can get help in person, via telepractice, individually and in groups.

You can also join a support group such as [The Stuttering Association for the Young](#) or [The Australian Speak Easy Association](#).

### How speech pathologists can help

Speech pathologists work with people who stutter, or who have a child who stutters.

They work with you to set goals and work towards those goals.

They can tell you about different evidence-based interventions and management strategies.

A speech pathologist can help find the best intervention for you.

They may also work alongside other professionals who can support you.

Speech pathologists know about stuttering and the best ways to help people who stutter to reach their goals.

### Read more about stuttering on the following websites:

- <https://www.uts.edu.au/asrc/information-about-stuttering/what-stuttering>
- <https://www.sayaustralia.org.au/stuttering-101/>
- <https://speakeasy.org.au/stuttering/>