

Patient information

Speaker Communication Tips

Ear Nose and Throat Speciality

Speaker communication tips to assist deaf or hard of hearing people.

When someone speaks, clues are gained, not only from what is heard but also from what is seen. These clues help the hearing impaired person to piece together the conversation.

For the deaf or hard of hearing person, the visual clues of speech become very important. Simple actions on your part determine the ease with which these visual clues can be followed.

The following points will help:-

1. Keep your face visible and ensure you have good light on your face, so the other person can see your features and lips easily.
2. Avoid speaking from another room, or with your head in a cupboard.
3. Do not hide your lip movements behind your hands, a cigarette or a pipe.
4. Do not speak while looking into a newspaper or book.
5. Keep your head fairly still when speaking.
6. Attract the observer's attention before you start talking to them so that they can catch the beginning of what is said and not just the ending.
7. Speak clearly, not too fast and do not shout. Shouting and over-mouthing will alter the lip pattern and speaking too slowly may destroy the natural rhythm of speech.
8. Try to make the subject of the conversation as clear as possible.
9. When you are speaking do not distract the observer's attention with unnecessary hand movements.
10. If you are wearing sunglasses, remove them while speaking.
11. Repeat the sentence again if necessary and then perhaps change the sentence slightly, it may make it easier to understand. You may not be aware of this but some words are more difficult to lip-read than others, for example, the month of 'March' is easier to lip-read than 'August'. In the word 'March' the shapes making the 'M' and 'ch' are visible on the lips, but the components in August are made inside the mouth so there is nothing to see.

12. Write down any important facts.

13. Be patient.

14. Remember... a hearing aid amplifies background noise as well as speech

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Further information

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