Who is a candidate for VNSNY Speech-Language Pathology?

Some important questions to ask yourself about your patient’s eligibility for a speech-language assessment:

- Is the patient’s speech slurred?
- Does the patient have a facial droop?
- Does the patient have difficulty following directions?
- Does the patient look to his/her family members to answer your questions?
- Is the patient unable to think of the correct word or name in response to your comments?
- Does the patient have a hoarse voice or are you having trouble hearing them speak?
- Does the patient have difficulty with foods, liquids or medication intake?

For more information about this service, or to refer a patient, please call VNSNY at 1-866-632-2557.
Symptoms for Communication and Swallowing Disorders

**Speech Disorders:**
- Dysarthrias
  - Slurred speech
  - Difficulty controlling loudness or rate
  - Limited verbal ability to communicate
  - Difficulty performing voluntary oral motor movements

  **Apraxia of Speech**
  - Difficulty initiating speech
  - Sounds produced are different from sounds intended (torg/dog)
  - Flow of speech is distorted
  - Obvious frustration, embarrassment

**Language Disorders (Aphasia):**
- **Receptive**
  - Problems understanding spoken or written information
  - Limited ability to follow conversation or commands
  - Difficulty understanding when reading

  **Expressive**
  - Inability to speak or express needs/wants
  - Difficulty recalling words affecting reading, writing and math skills
  - Speech is clear, but words don’t make sense
  - Unable to formulate a complete sentence

**Voice Disorders:**
- **Vocal Quality**
  - Breathy, hoarse voice
  - Loss or intermittent loss of voice
  - Up or down nasality
  - Tremulous or jerky quality
  - Harsh, strangled voice

  **Loudness**
  - Loss of voice
  - Voice too soft/weak
  - Voice too loud

  **Pitch**
  - Pitch too high or too low
  - Monotone pitch
  - Pitch breaks

**Swallowing Disorders:**
- Difficulty swallowing
- Coughing when eating or drinking and/or weak cough reflex
- Wet/gurgly voice
- Dripping, food/liquid spilling out of mouth
- Poor respiratory control during swallowing
- Unexplained weight loss
- Poor oral intake

**Cognitive-Communicative Disorders:**
- Decreased or limited ability to attend, focus, concentrate
- Disorientation to person, place or time
- Decreased memory skills (immediate, short-term, long-term)
- Impaired executive functioning (verbal reasoning, problem solving, judgment skills)
Some typical conditions and impairments where speech-language pathology is beneficial:

- Stroke
- Parkinson's disease
- Multiple sclerosis
- ALS
- Alzheimer's
- Dementia
- Head or brain injury
- Head or neck cancer
- Vocal abuse (using voice in the wrong way)
- Severe or long-term illness

Through hands-on care rooted in best practice protocols, our speech-language pathologists focus on restoring communication skills for everyday situations and promoting effective, safe swallowing to improve outcomes and speed recovery.

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