

Get the facts about stuttering

Speech is an important part of communicating. Yet millions of people cope with a speech disability every day.

WHAT IS STUTTERING?

Stuttering is a problem that affects how your speech flows. People who stutter may:

- Stretch words out for too long when speaking
- Have pauses where they can't get a word out
- Repeat whole words or parts of words
- Have uncontrolled movements when speaking, such as trembling in the jaw or excessive blinking

Scientists don't fully understand why stuttering happens. But we do have plenty of facts about this speech disorder. Learn more about what it is and how you can help someone who has it.



FACT #1: Stuttering isn't related to intelligence.

Stuttering isn't a problem with being confused or less intelligent. In fact, many intelligent and successful people have dealt with this speech disorder.

FACT #2: Finishing a word or sentence for someone is not helpful.

People who don't understand stuttering may get frustrated or impatient when someone stutters. They may just want to say the word for them so they can keep talking. This is not helpful and could make stuttering worse.

FACT #3: Stuttering is not caused by stress or being tense.

Experts believe that people who stutter may have some brain differences. These differences affect how a person's brain works when they speak. But it's not caused by anxiety, stress or a mental health condition. However, being stressed could make stuttering worse for a person who already has the disorder.

FACT #4: Stuttering is more common in children.

Many children stutter while they are learning how to speak and understand others. Most of the time, children stop stuttering before they become adults. They may need help from their doctor and a speech-language pathologist. If you're concerned about your child's stuttering, talk to their pediatrician.

If you have concerns about stuttering, finding words or other speech issues, talk to your doctor about seeing a licensed speech-language pathologist.

Sources: American Speech-Language-Hearing Association, National Institutes of Deafness and Other Communication Disorders