

## YOU CAN SPEAK MORE CLEARLY

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Difficulty with speech (dysarthria) may occur in approximately 40% of people with MS. Problems are typically mid to moderate, and may interfere with how easily a person's speech can be heard and understood

### COMMON SPEECH PROBLEMS

- Reduced loudness may be due to poor breath support/control.
- Imprecise articulation may be due to weakness, slowness, or incoordination of the lips, tongue, and soft palate.
- Flow of speech may be slow, have irregular pauses, or excess and equal emphasis due to poor timing of respiration and articulation.
- Voice quality may be harsh or hypernasal if there is neuromuscular involvement of the soft palate or vocal folds.



A Speech Language Pathologist (SLP) can evaluate specific speech/voice problems and recommend treatment. The primary goal is to improve intelligibility and naturalness of speech with communication partners.

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## **STRATEGIES FOR SPEAKING MORE CLEARLY**

- **Fill Your Lungs Fully:** Use your diaphragm
- **Speak Louder:** Push out with extra effort
- **Slow Down:** Allow extra time for your lip and tongue movements
- **Exaggerate Articulation:** Make precise contacts with your lips and tongue to reduce slurring
- **Pause strategically:** Every few words, to allow for better breath support, loudness, and articulation
- **Actively Self Evaluate:** Watch for feedback from the listener, and correct your speech if it appears to not be understood



At times, specialized equipment may be recommended, such as:

- Voice amplifier (with headset microphone) when adequately increasing loudness is too difficult
- Speech generating devices