

Speech-Language Pathology

Speech-language pathologists (SLPs) work to prevent, assess, diagnose and treat speech, language, social communication, cognitive-communication, and swallowing disorders in children and adults. People are referred to speech-language pathology at the Neuroscience, Orthopedics, and Wellness Center for a comprehensive assessment of speech, language, cognitive-communication skills, and/or swallowing. The speech-language pathologist will evaluate, treat and counsel patients to promote optimal communication and swallowing to improve quality of life, increase safety, and reduce risks of social isolation.

Reasons for Evaluation

1. You are having difficulty eating (i.e., Coughing with food and/or liquid, food is getting stuck in your mouth, food feels stuck in your throat after you swallow, you feel like it takes extra effort to swallow, etc.).
2. You have chronic pneumonia
3. You are having difficulty speaking with people
4. You are having difficulty understanding what people say to you
5. You are having difficulty with your memory, attention, and/or problem solving skills
6. You have a history of a neurological event and/or disease (i.e., stroke, brain injury, Parkinson's disease, Huntington's disease, etc.)
7. Sometimes your physicians find that a detailed speech and swallowing evaluation can help them determine the nature and severity and indeed cause of your symptoms. Not all speech and swallowing symptoms are caused by your primary neurological problem.
8. The evaluation permits the team to track changes in your communication and swallowing.

What should I expect from my visit?

A licensed and certified speech language pathologist will assess your speech, language, cognitive-communication, and swallowing skills to provide you with a diagnosis and determine severity. The evaluation will last 60-90 minutes. No preparation is needed. For swallowing evaluations, we suggest you eat lightly prior to the assessment. The SLP will provide you with a treatment plan for speech language therapy if indicated.

What next?

If your speech-language pathologist determines that therapy is appropriate, we will schedule the treatments. In addition to traditional speech language therapy, which is appropriate for many conditions, we offer LSVT – LOUD (an evidence-based treatment used often in Parkinson's disease), EMST (an evidence-based treatment used in a number of neurological conditions), and IOPI (a tongue-strengthening technique for certain swallowing and speech disorders) for those patients who qualify.

Clinicians

Woodford A. Beach, Ph.D., CCC-SLP has specialized in neurogenic communication disorders for the majority of his 34 years in primarily hospital-based practice.

Preston F. Pugh, M.Ed., CCC-SLP has worked primarily as an adult Outpatient Speech Language Pathologist for over 7 years treating a variety of language, motor speech, cognitive-linguistic, voice and swallowing disorders.

Both Dr. Beach and Mrs. Pugh are certified in Lee Silverman Voice Treatment LOUD® for Parkinson's disease.