

# Communication Disorder Questionnaire for Adult Patients

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Speech-Language &  
Audiology Canada  
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La communication à cœur

Health-care professionals and caregivers can use this questionnaire as a guideline to help determine when to refer a patient to a speech-language pathologist or audiologist.

## Communication & Swallowing

- Do you have difficulty following instructions? Do you need to have instructions repeated?
- Are you unable to have meaningful conversations?
- Do you have trouble finding the right words when you are speaking?
- Do you have trouble following the storyline of television programs?
- Do other people find it hard to understand you when you speak?
- Have you noticed any changes in your weight? (*Weight loss is one of the earliest symptoms of dysphagia.*)
- Do you cough at mealtimes? Do you often clear your throat?
- Do you feel like food or liquids “stick” in your throat?
- Do you avoid any foods or liquids?
- Do you avoid dining out or eating in social situations?

*If a patient answers ‘yes’ to any of the above questions, refer the patient to a speech-language pathologist. With older patients, consult a speech-language pathologist during the diagnostic process for dementia as early language symptoms can often distinguish amongst the subtypes of dementia.*

## Hearing & Balance

- Are you able to hear but don’t understand what other people are saying?
- Do you have difficulty following conversations?
- When you listen to other people speak, does their speech sound “muffled”?
- Do you frequently need to ask for repetition or clarification?
- Have you had to turn up the volume on your television or computer?
- Have you been avoiding social situations?
- Do you hear ringing in your ears? How often?
- Do you feel as though you are moving or spinning or as though your environment is moving or spinning?
- Do you find yourself losing your balance?
- I see you have hearing aids. When was the last time you saw your audiologist? (*Patients should see the audiologist for a hearing evaluation and hearing aid check annually or sooner if they notice any changes.*)

*If a patient answers ‘yes’ to any of the above questions, refer the patient to an audiologist. Patients who already have hearing aids should see an audiologist annually for a hearing evaluation and hearing aid check, or as soon as they notice any changes in their hearing. Adults should have their hearing tested by the age of 40 – even if they don’t think they’re having any problems – and go for a hearing test every two to three years after that.*

To find an audiologist or speech-language pathologist near you, visit our [Find a Professional Directory](#)