

Primary Progressive Aphasia (PPA)

Information for patients and families

What is primary progressive aphasia?

Primary progressive aphasia (PPA) is a brain disease that affects cells in your brain. It causes you to have difficulty with language.

What are the symptoms?

People with PPA usually have trouble:

- speaking as they can mispronounce words, stutter or have difficulty starting to speak
- remembering the words to use when speaking
- understanding what others say
- reading and writing

As the disease becomes worse, people with PPA are almost unable to speak at all. Over time, PPA also causes changes to memory and/or behaviour.

This can make it unsafe for people with PPA to care for themselves.



What causes PPA?

We don't know what causes PPA, but we know that there is a buildup of bad proteins in the brain, similar to Frontotemporal Lobar Degeneration or Alzheimer's disease.

For now, doctors can only be sure of the cause of PPA after an autopsy (examining the body after death). But, as doctors learn more about the signs and symptoms, this may change in the future.

Are there treatments?

Right now, there is no cure for PPA, but practicing speaking skills for as long as possible can help.

What about safety?

Since PPA affects your language, it can eventually become unsafe for a person with PPA to:

- read (for example: medicine instructions, bills, legal papers)
- write (for example: cheques)
- cook
- drive



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