

Communication, Swallowing, And Cognition

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Speech Language
Pathologist

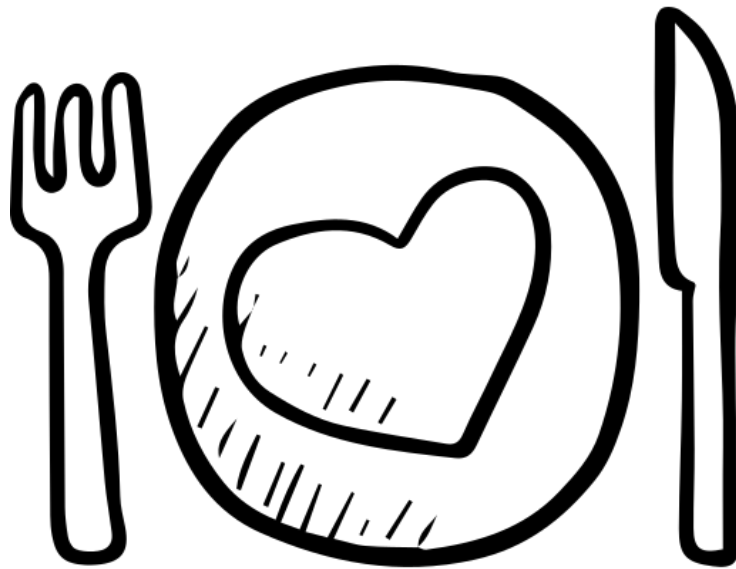
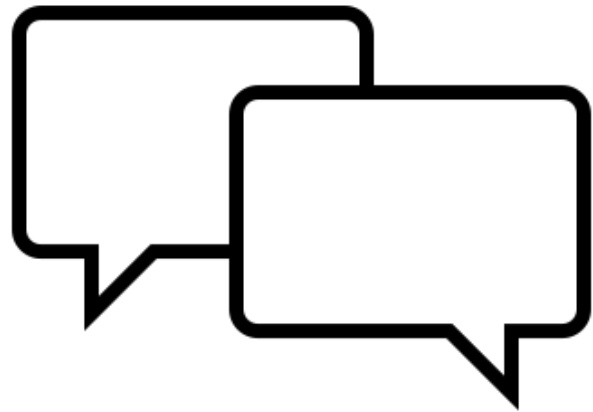
Neurology Clinic

Jim Pattison Outpatient
Care and Surgery Centre

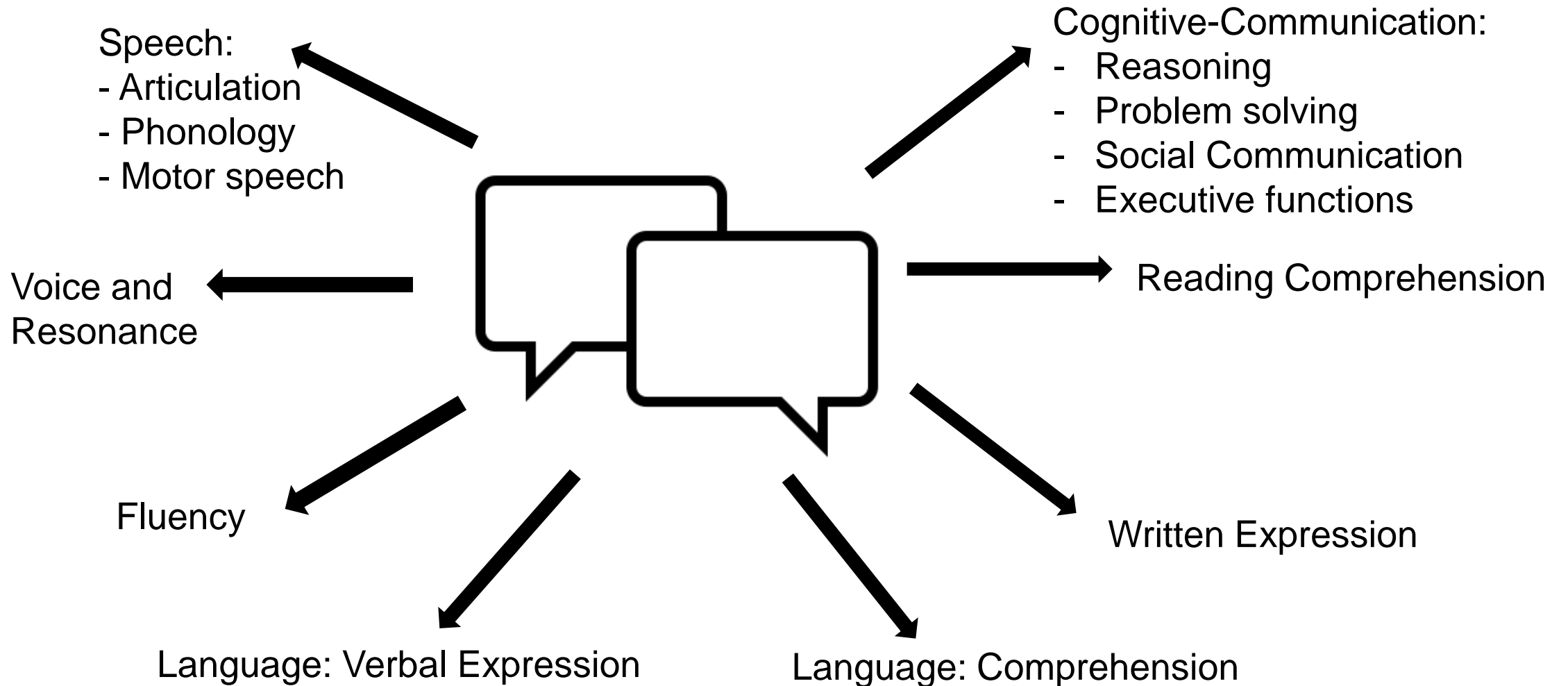
Outline

1. Speech Language Pathology
2. Definitions
3. Briefly: Parkinson's Disease
4. Communication and Swallowing Changes in PD
5. Cognition and possible impact on communication/swallowing
6. Strategies for Communication
7. Strategies for Swallowing
8. Functional Strategies for Daily Life

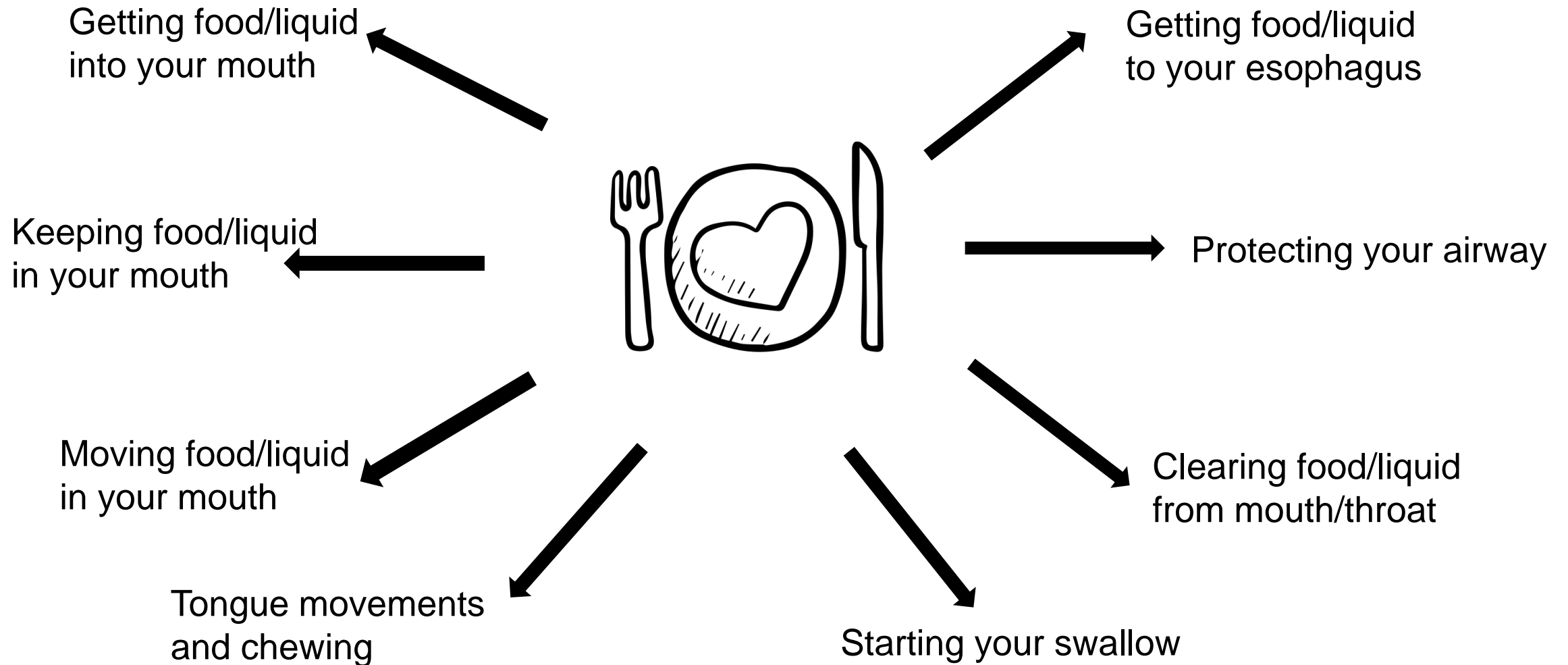
Speech Language Pathology



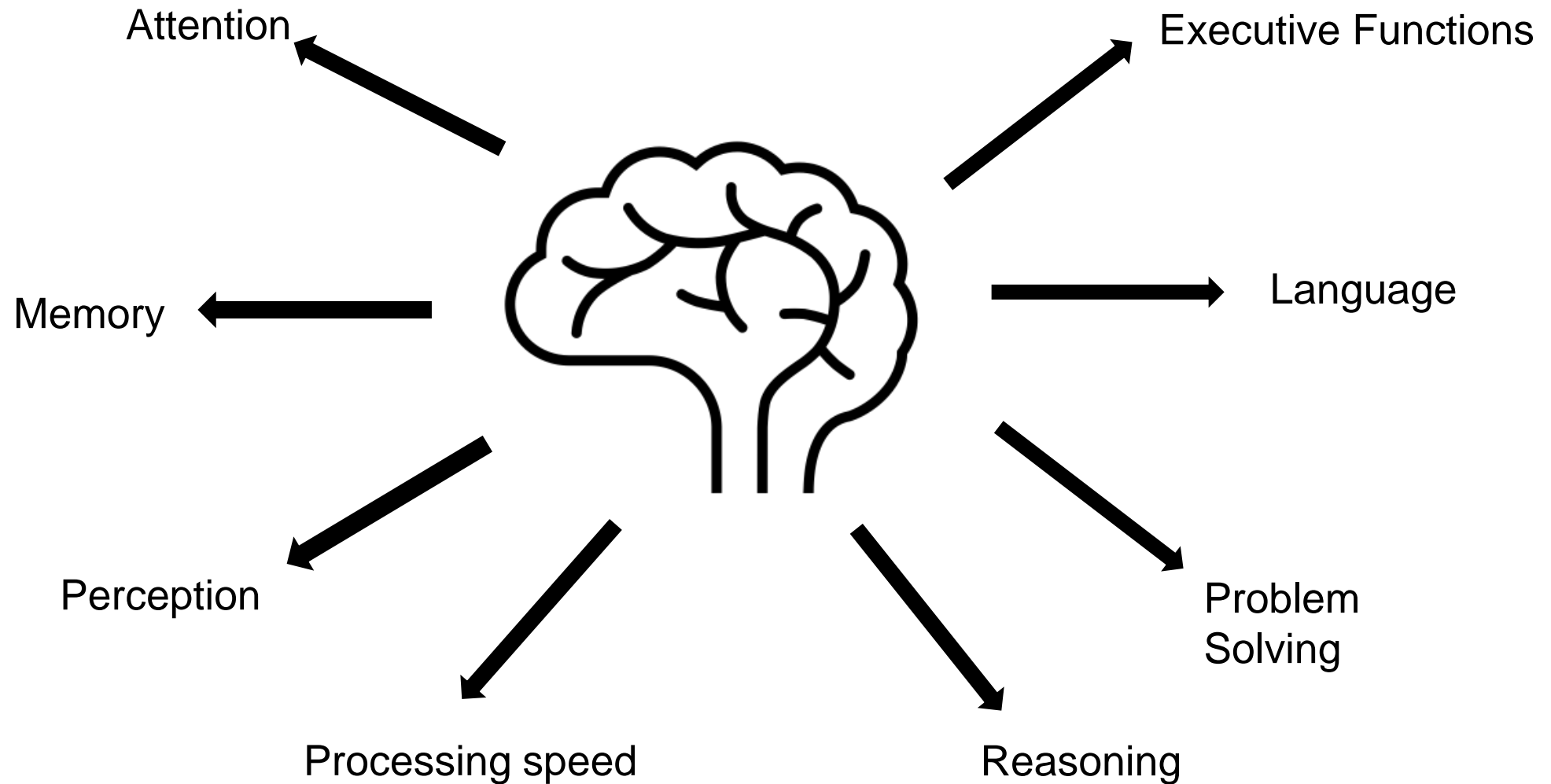
Communication



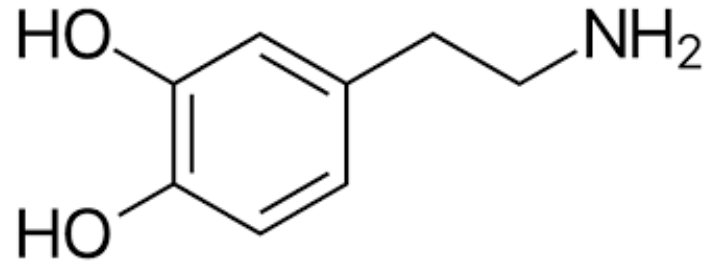
Swallowing



Cognition



Parkinson's Disease



- Progressive movement disorder
- Loss of dopamine – a key player!
- Cardinal signs: tremor, stiffness, slowed movement
- Motor and non-motor symptoms
- Whole body disease



Parkinson Canada
www.parkinson.ca
www.ParkinsonClinicalGuidelines.ca

**CANADIAN
GUIDELINE
FOR PARKINSON
DISEASE, 2ND EDITION**

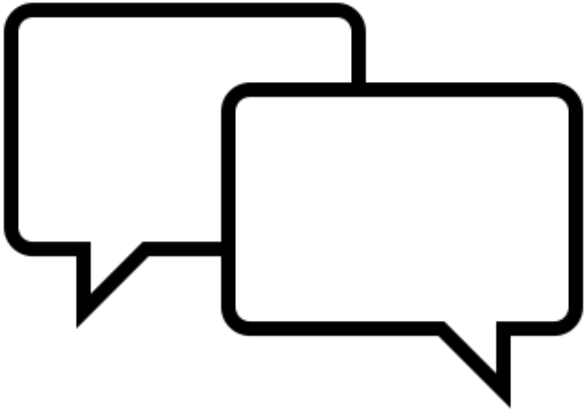
“Speech and language therapy is
essential to the quality of life
of patients with Parkinson disease.”

“Speech and language therapy should be offered to
people with Parkinson disease who are experiencing
problems with **communication, swallowing or saliva.**”

Communication & Swallowing Changes

- **Communication changes: between 80% and 100%**
 - Ramig et al. (2008); Ho et al., (1998); Perez-Lloret et al., (2012).
 - **Psychosocial impact high** (Miller et al., 2006)
- **Swallowing: numbers vary based on stage – up to 95%**
 - Perez-Lloret et al., (2012)., Harterlius and Sveenson (1994), Kalf et al., (2012), Nagaya et al., (1998); see López-Liria et al., (2020)
 - **Underreported by patients (35%) vs what is evaluated by SLPs (82%) - Kalf et al., (2012)**
 - **Important risk factor for aspiration pneumonia** (Langmore et al., 1998)

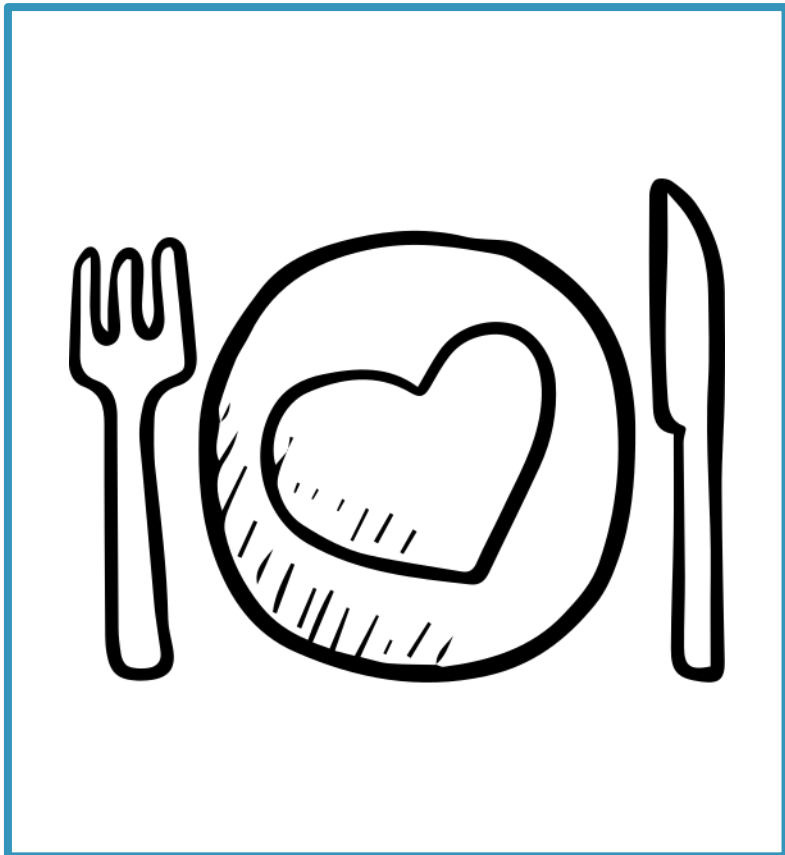
Communication Changes



- Quieter volume or difficulty changing volume
- Imprecise articulation
- Breathy or hoarse voice
- Monotone speech
- Less melody (prosody) variation
- Change in rate of speech
- Difficulty initiating speech
- Dysfluency
- Decreased facial expression
- Word finding difficulty

- Sensory feedback impacted

Swallowing Changes



- Slow eating/drinking; increased meal times
 - Pocketing food
 - Trouble controlling food/drinks
 - Slowed, less efficient chewing/moving food
 - Difficulty starting a swallow
 - Food feels stuck
 - Coughing, throat clearing, or choking
 - Drooling or excess saliva
 - Difficulty swallowing pills
-
- Can be: recurring pneumonias, chest infection, weight loss, eliminating foods from diet

See a Speech Language Pathologist

If you're experiencing any of the signs or symptoms discussed on the previous slides, please ask for a referral to your speech language pathologist.

Ask for an assessment and any treatment/management options.

Cognitive Changes



Mild Cognitive Impairment and dementia can occur in the PD population.

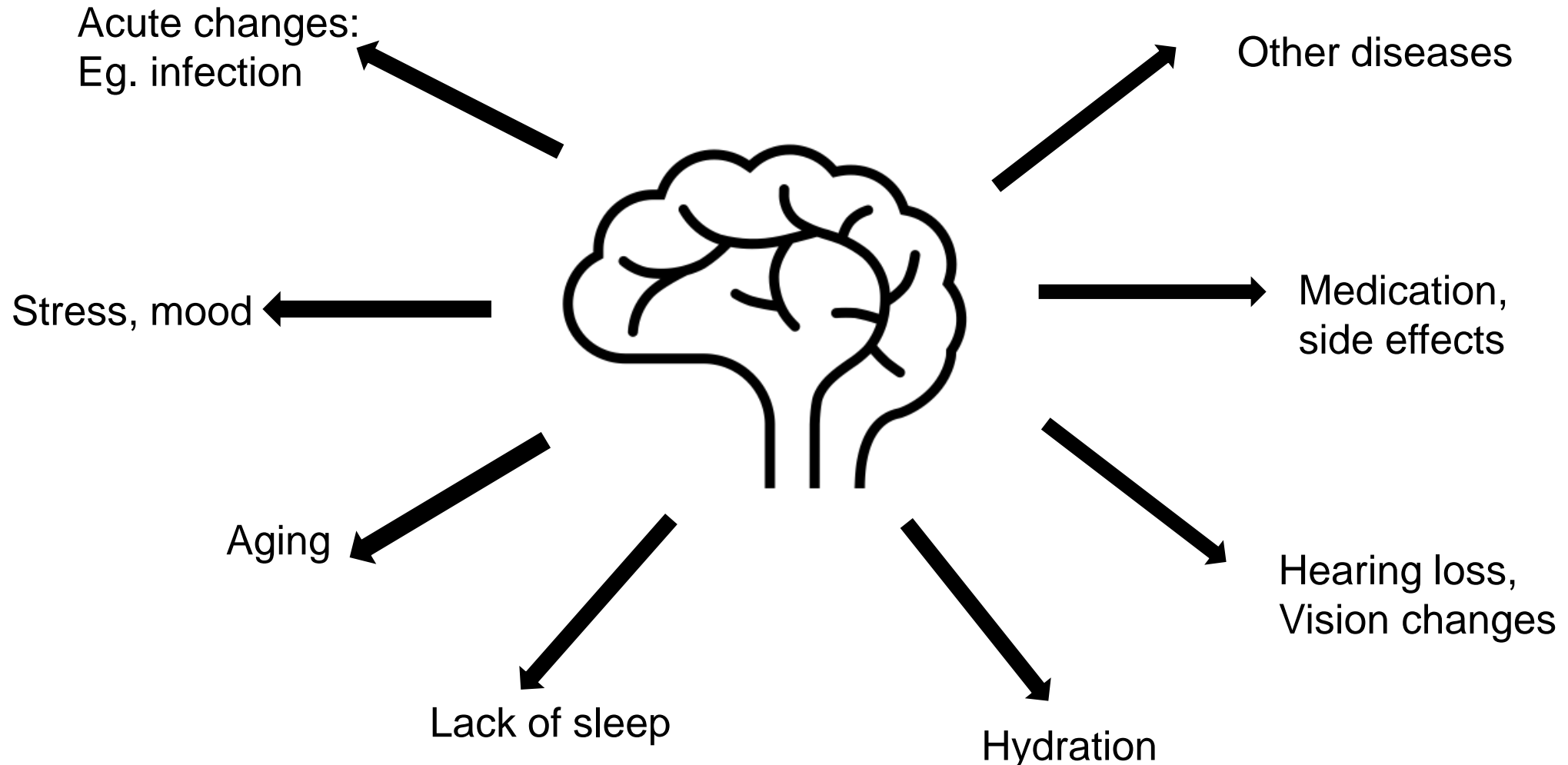
- Important to rule out other causes.

Cognitive changes:

- Memory
- Attention
- Processing speed
- Executive functions
- Perception
- Language

Cognitive changes impact speech and swallowing.

Caveat: Cognition can change for many reasons



Cognition, Communication, Swallowing

| Area | Possible Effect on Communication | Possible Effect on Swallowing/Mealtimes |
|----------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Attention | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Difficulty multitasking• Unable to divide attention• Easily distracted | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Difficulty focusing on meal• Distractions• Awareness of food in the mouth |
| Memory | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Does not recall a conversation/topic• Word finding difficulties• Difficulty recalling phone numbers• Does not recall instructions | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Use of swallowing strategies• Forgetting mealtimes• Forgetting when ate last• Difficulty with steps of eating (chew, swallow) |
| Processing Speed | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Extra time to understand• Extra time to respond• Stuck on a previous topic• Needs repetition | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Slower response time to verbal cue• Slower response time to food offered |
| Executive Functions | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Difficulty with decision making• Planning a discussion, what to say• Staying on topic• Losing train of thought | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Impulsive eating• Difficulty slowing down |

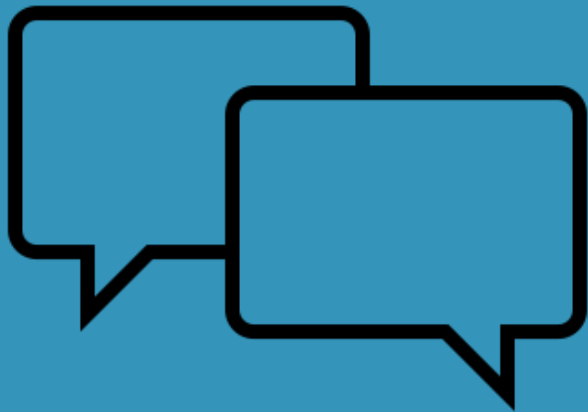
Strategies

1. Communication
2. Swallowing
3. Daily life



Communication:

Set yourself up
for success



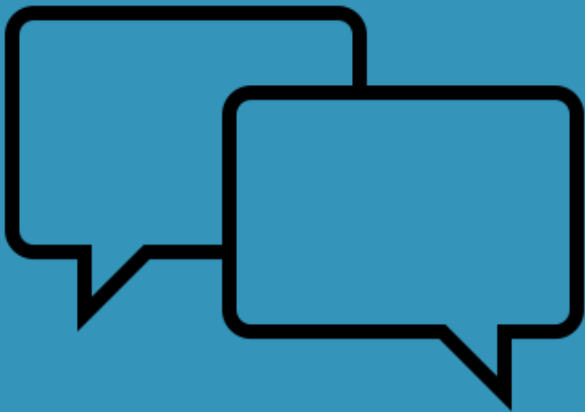
Environment:

- Reduce background noise
- Reduce distractions
- 1:1 vs group setting
- Good lighting
- Face each other
- Eye contact
- Hearing aids and glasses
- Make sure it's a good time – time of day, energy, abilities
- Have conversation aids or visuals if needed



Communication:

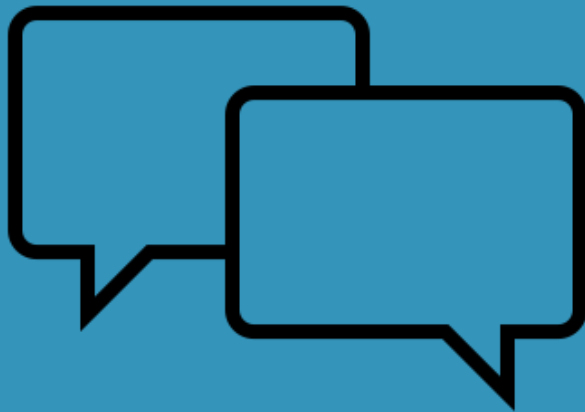
How you say it
matters.



-
- Give context
 - Simplify the message
 - Shorter sentences
 - Say it slowly and normal volume
 - Be direct (but kind)
 - Yes/No or simple choices
 - Proper names vs pronouns
 - Break it down
 - Say it in more than one way
 - Pictures, objects, environment
 - Gestures
 - Memory tools
 - Write down keywords

Communication:

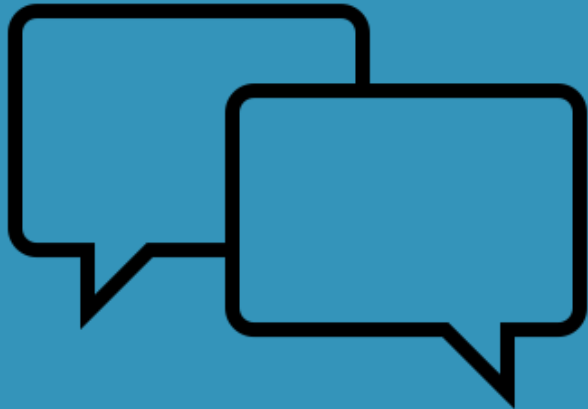
Support
understanding.



-
- Be patient
 - Provide time to process and respond
 - Confirm understanding
 - Repeat the message
 - Rephrase
 - Summarize
 - Refer to keywords
 - Break down a longer message
 - Hearing/Vision

Communication:

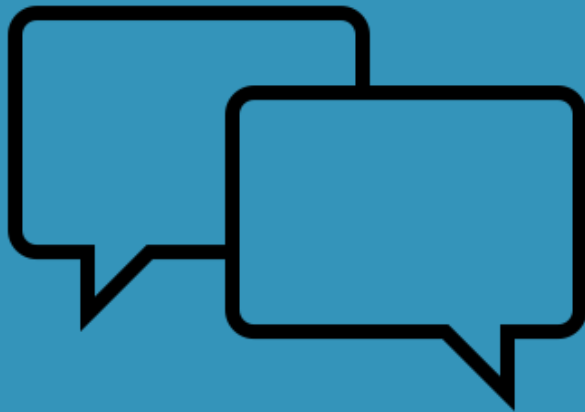
Listen closely
(and not just
with your ears).



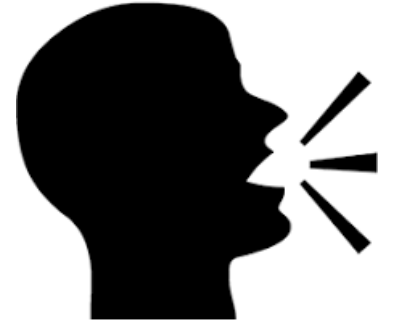
-
- Be an active listener: body language, eye gaze, intonation, context, word choice
 - Be honest if you didn't understand
 - Ask for repetition
 - Ask for clarification
 - Confirm
 - Be open to and ENCOURAGE their strategies or other ways of communicating:
 - Notepad
 - AAC
 - Gesture, pointing, drawing...
 - Be patient, encouraging, respectful
 - Know when to take a break – emotions
 - Don't demand perfection.

Communication:

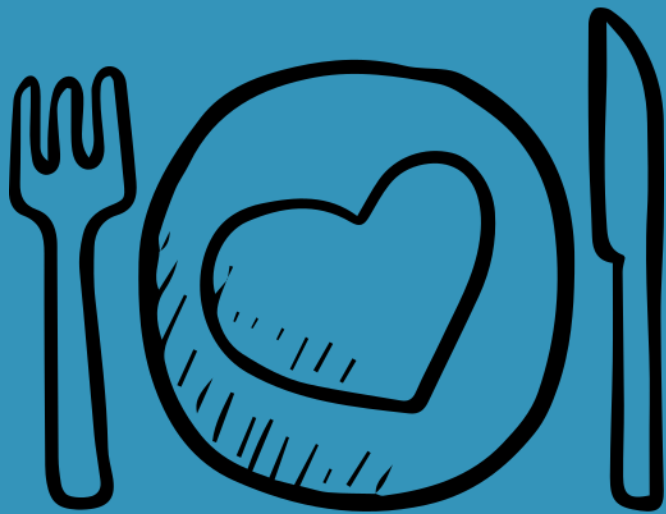
For the Person with PD



-
- Slow down
 - Take a deep breath
 - Exaggerate articulation
 - Be louder
 - Say it in less words
 - Use other ways to communicate:
 - Writing
 - Gesture
 - Drawing
 - AAC
 - Word finding strategies
 - Confirm your communication partner understood
 - Take a break



Swallowing and Mealtimes:



-
- Environment – calm, quiet
 - Reduce distractions
 - Don't hurry
 - Consider energy conservation
 - Sit at eye level
 - Visual or verbal cues
 - Reduce bite/sip sizes
 - Encourage cutlery down between bites
 - Watch for swallow
 - Check mouth for residue



Swallowing and Mealtimes:



-
- Support oral care
 - Stay upright - 30 minutes
 - Monitor weight, intake, signs/symptoms of aspiration, pneumonia
 - Incorporate wishes/choices
 - Avoid force feeding
 - Learn what to do in an emergency
 - Pay attention to timing
 - Find other ways to celebrate



* Everyone is different. Follow the recommendations of your SLP, as they pertain to you.

Strategies for Daily Life



Routine!



Reminders



Orientation
Station



Launch Pad



Memory
Books



Technology

Don't underestimate the power of routine!



Daily routine – check it off

Calendar, planners, whiteboard, notebooks

A place for everything, and everything in its place.

Laminated lists & check boxes

Habit stacking

Support independence



Reminders



- Create and keep lists for common things:
 - Groceries
 - Phone numbers
- Sticky notes or whiteboard markers!
- Alarms, smartphones, watches, Time Timer
- Notebooks:
 - Daily diary
 - For lists
 - By the phone
- Labels
- Colour code



Orientation Station



- An area in your home with information about the day, month, time, year.

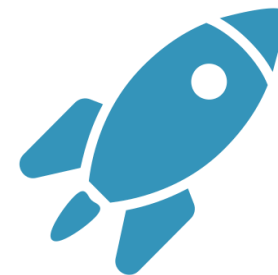
Can include:

- monthly calendar
- a whiteboard
- important contacts
- daily routine
- digital clock
- photos of family/friends

Launch Pad



- Designated place for everything you need when:
- You leave the house:
 - Keys, purse, mask, mobility aid
 - Emergency contact information
 - Note reminders
- Can be adapted to other areas



Memory books



- Put together a photo album with:
 - About me page
 - Where I was born, job, family, accomplishments
 - Hobbies, interests
 - Pictures of family and friends with names
 - Emergency contact information
- Use as a communication support or reminiscing



Technology



- Alarms - on clocks or smart phones
 - Importance of snooze!
- Voice activated technology (VAT) – Google Home, Alexa, Siri, etc
- Set reminders on phones (calendar pop ups)
- Put appointments in phone calendars
- Use Zoom or video to maintain social connections



Stay active!



- Physical exercise
- Cognitive exercise
 - Puzzles, sudoku, word searches
- Linguistic exercise – speech, voice
 - Read – out loud!
 - Podcasts, radio
 - Call friends, family
 - Discuss current events, memories, your day, TV show/movie
 - Read to grandkids
 - Write emails
 - Socialize
 - Engage
 - Find a support group



Questions?





Thank you!

WORD FINDING STRATEGIES – FOR THE SPEAKER

- Name **the category** of the word
- **Describe it** – appearance (color, shape, size), material, use
- **Talk around it** – give as much information as you can, or relate it to a memory (eg. we saw these animals in Australia)
- Use **related words** – eg. for “bed” – sleep, tired, nap, furniture
- Use **synonyms** – words that mean the same thing
- Use **gestures** to express meaning, describe an object, state of being, event, or point to it
- Think of the **first letter**
- **Try the word in a sentence** or if the word goes naturally with another word (eg. salt and _____)
- Use the **opposite**
- Try to **write it** down
- **Draw a picture**
- **Look it up** – is it in a photo album or book somewhere?
- **Take your time.** Sometimes pausing and coming back to it makes all the difference.

Not all word finding strategies work for everyone. Give them a try to see what works for you.

WAYS TO SUPPORT WORD FINDING – FOR THE LISTENER

If you know what the speaker is trying to say, it can sometimes help to support them with some of the following:

- Give them the first few sounds of the word
- Tell them the first letter
- Write down the first few letters
- Tell them the function
- Give them a common sentence or opposite it is used with
- Give a hint related to a shared memory
- Spell the whole word aloud

Not all cues work for everyone. Test them out to see if they are helpful!

FIND A SPEECH LANGUAGE PATHOLOGIST

1. Ask your GP or Neurologist for a referral in public health
 - Public health may be in clinic or virtual
 - Some health authorities may have community SLPs who can come to your home
 - Some neurology clinics may have SLPs
2. If private speech therapy is an option, search Speech and Hearing BC (“Find a Professional”): <http://speechandhearingbc.ca> - can search by area of expertise (eg. Parkinson’s) and location

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