

Reading and writing

The ability to read and write can be affected by a stroke or brain injury in several ways:

- Not being able to read or write text.
- Not being able to understand the text.
- Reading and/or writing gives you a headache or makes you feel ill.
- You have difficulty reading/writing more than a few lines without forgetting what you have read/written.
- It is hard to focus on an individual line of text.
- Reading and/or writing makes you extremely tired.

Although you might not get the reading and writing skills back that you had prior to your brain injury or stroke, it is possible to make reading and writing easier by using some different strategies:

Reading

- Do not try and read when you are tired, and make sure you are reading in a comfortable and well lit environment.
- Use a ruler and place it under each line as you read. This will help you focus on the line of text you want to read and you will not be so distracted by the rest of the text.
- Stop for 30 seconds or a minute's short break after you have read a paragraph or a page.





- Write a note or keywords in the margin with a pencil to refer to if you have difficulty remembering what you have just read.
- If you really have difficulty remembering read aloud into a Dictaphone, or summarise the main points into a dictaphone and then play them back next time you open the book.
- If you have difficulty focussing on small text, get books with bigger text, or use a magnifying glass.
- If reading is really impossible for you, contact your library about the possibility of getting talking books.
- If you have severe physical difficulties, there are now page turning machines that can be attached to your wheelchair.

Writing

- Do not try and write when you are tired, and make sure you are writing in a comfortable and well lit environment.
- Use a word processor or keyboard to type rather than write by hand if that is easier.
- Use spell-checker on the computer or a dictionary to check your work.
- Get someone else to proof read your work to make sure it is correct and makes sense.



- Dictate your written work to someone else if you are having difficulty writing it.
- Dictate what you want to write into a Dictaphone and then play it back line by line and write it. This will help with fatigue, because you are planning ahead what you have to write, and you do not have to think and write at the same time. You can play back each sentence as many times as you like and write at your own pace.
- Use speech recognition software and dictate what you want to write. Windows Vista supplies this software free in the “Ease of Access” section.



To learn more about Traumatic Brain Injury and strategies to enhance communication, speech, memory and cognition, you can read about and purchase books on our website www.icommunicatetherapy.com. Click this link to see our online Resource Centre [Book Shop](#)

Suggested reading:

Brain, Heal Thyself: A Caregiver's New Approach to Recovery from Stroke, Aneurysm, And Traumatic Brain Injuries

by Madonna Siles and Lawrence J. Beuret

Brain Injury Survivor's Guide: Welcome to Our World

by Larry Jameson and Beth Jameson

Textbook of Traumatic Brain Injury

by Stuart C. Yudofsky, Jonathan M. Silver, and Thomas W. McAllister

The Mild Traumatic Brain Injury Workbook: Your Program for Regaining Cognitive Function & Overcoming Emotional Pain (New Harbinger Self-Help Workbook)

by Douglas J. Mason and Gottfried Jean-Louis

Living with Brain Injury: A Guide for Families, Second Edition

by Richard C Senelick and Karla Dougherty

Rehabilitation for Traumatic Brain Injury

by Walter M. High, Angelle M. Sander, Margaret A. Struchen, and Karin A. Hart

Traumatic Brain Injury in Children and Adolescents: Assessment and Intervention

by Margaret Semrud-Clikeman

The Brain That Changes Itself: Stories of Personal Triumph from the Frontiers of Brain Science (James H. Silberman Books)

by Norman Doidge

Aphasia Therapy Workshop: Current Approaches to Aphasia Therapy-- Principles and Applications

by Jacqueline Stark, Nadine Martin, and Ruth Fink

Beyond Aphasia: Therapies For Living With Communication Disability

by Carole Pound, Susie Parr, Jayne Lindsay, and Celia Woolf