

## 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 Stroke/CVA, aids and strategies to enhance communication, speech and cognition, you can read about and purchase books on our website [www.icommunicatetherapy.com](http://www.icommunicatetherapy.com). Click this link to see our online Resource Centre

[Book Shop](#)

### **Suggested reading:**

**Living With Stroke: A Guide for Families** by Richard C Senelick and Karla Dougherty

**Brain, Heal Thyself: A Caregiver's New Approach to Recovery from Stroke, Aneurysm, And Traumatic Brain Injuries** by Madonna Siles and Lawrence J. Beuret

**Peeling the Onion: Reversing the Ravages of Stroke** by Robin Robinson

**The Stroke Recovery Book: A Guide for Patients and Families** by Kip Burkman, Bob Hoganmiller, and David Jenkins

**After Stroke** by David M. Hinds

**Family Guide to Surviving Stroke & Communications Disorders** by Dennis C. Tanner

**Stronger After Stroke: Your Roadmap to Recovery** by Peter G. Levine

**Rewire Your Brain, Rewire Your Life: A Handbook for Stroke Survivors & Their Caregivers** by Bob Guns

**Stroke Recovery and Rehabilitation** by Joel Stein

**My Stroke of Insight: A Brain Scientist's Personal Journey** by Jill Bolte Taylor

**Talking About Aphasia: Living With Loss of Language After Stroke** by Susie Parr, Sally Byng, Sue Gilpin, and Chris Ireland

**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