

# The facts

## STUTTERING IS:

### NOT CAUSED BY ANXIETY

Stuttering is a disorder which causes problems in the control and coordination of speech. Most people who stutter have a genetically inherited predisposition to stuttering. Situations which produce anxiety often make speech more difficult for everyone – whether or not they stutter.

### NOT CAUSED BY SHYNESS

Some people who stutter are shy. Other people who stutter are outgoing, friendly and talkative.

### NOT IMITATED

Stuttering tends to run in families so it is usual to find more than one member of a family who stutters. However, the link is genetic rather through imitation of someone else's speech.

### TREATABLE IN ADULTS

It is true that there is no “magic pill” that will take stuttering away forever. However, effective treatment is available to control stuttering and allow normal conversation in everyday situations.

### NOT ALWAYS HARD TO TREAT

It depends on the severity of the stutter. Some treatments are simple with obvious, quick results. Other treatments take longer, but the results can still be spectacular. Successful treatment depends largely on motivation and cooperation of the person who stutters.

### NOT CAUSED BY LOW IQ

There is no connection between the cause of stuttering and intelligence.

# Speak for

## TYPES OF STUTTERS:

**Repetitions-** e.g “P-p-p-lease”

**Blocks-** Silence as the person tries to speak.

**Prolongations-** e.g “Wha-a-a-a-at’s that?”

Head and facial movements may also be a part of stuttering

## WHAT CAUSES IT?

Although the cause of stuttering is unknown, it is not an emotional disorder, or the result of trauma or anxiety. Most people who stutter have been born with an inherited predisposition to stuttering.

Stuttering nearly always starts before five years of age, and if not treated may become more severe over the years. Stuttering may be worse in certain situations e.g. when talking on the phone, to a stranger or in a tense situation. Anxiety makes it harder for everyone to talk and simply increases the problem for a person who stutters.

Effective treatment is available for people who stutter no matter what their age. In fact, treatment is quicker and usually more effective with young children who begin treatment soon after their stuttering begins. Effective treatment is also available for older children, adolescents and adults.

Age or severity of stuttering is no barrier to starting treatment. Speech pathologists can give up to date advice about stuttering and tell you where treatment is available.

# themselves

## WHAT SHOULD I DO?

If you know someone who stutters, here are some ways you can help:

- Ask a speech pathologist for advice.
- Remember that a person who stutters only has difficulty talking. They can think and act quickly, and can work as hard as anyone else.
- Maintain eye contact and give the person time to finish what they are saying,
- Avoid giving suggestions like: “slow down” or “take your time”.



# The Fiction

FALSE  
Stuttering is an emotional problem caused by anxiety.

FALSE  
People who stutter are nervous and shy.

FALSE  
Stuttering is caused by copying the stuttered speech of other family members.

FALSE  
Stuttering is not treatable in adults.

FALSE  
Treatment for adults is complicated.

FALSE  
People who stutter are less intelligent than those who don't stutter.

If you have any questions or require further information about stuttering, please contact a speech pathologist at your local community health centre, hospital or private practice.

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

## Websites

Australian Stuttering Research Centre  
[http://sydney.edu.au/health\\_sciences/asrc](http://sydney.edu.au/health_sciences/asrc)

Stuttering Unit  
<http://www.sswahs.nsw.gov.au/bankstown/stuttering>

iStutter  
<http://www.latrobe.edu.au/istutter/>

Reference:  
Bloodstein, O. (1995), *A Handbook on Stuttering (Fifth Edition)*, Singular Publishing Group



Health  
South Western Sydney  
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# STUTTERING

## Fact & Fiction



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