



# Tips to speak clearly and be understood

UHN

## Information for patients

### How can I speak more clearly?

- Move your mouth more when you speak. This helps to make each sound clearer.
- Speak **loudly** and slowly.
- Pronounce every sound of each word. Be sure to pronounce the last sound of words.
- Speak syllable by syllable. Speak word by word.
- Make “key words” stand out. Say these words louder, with more emphasis.
- Take a good breath from your belly before speaking.

### How can I help others understand what I want to say?

- Introduce a topic. Tell people what you want to talk about.
- If possible, make sure that people can see your mouth when you talk.
- Use body language and gestures to help get your message across.

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Created: 11/2012  
Form: D-5940

If you cannot say the right word, try these things:

- describe the word
- use a different word
- act it out
- write it down

### **What else can help?**

- Make sure it is quiet around you (turn off the radio or TV).
- Follow rules, such as 1 person speaks at a time. Take turns to speak.

### **Remember:**

You do not have to use these tips all the time. Use them when:

- you want your speech to be **clear**
- you need people to **understand**
- some words or sounds are hard for you to say

**Communication is more than speech.**