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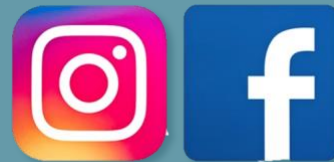
Issue 46

Summer 2022

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Suite 3, 36 Cameron Road, Tauranga 3110
PO Box 13435, Tauranga Central, Tauranga 3141

From the Office

We hope you had a good time with family and friends over the Christmas and New Year period. We had some glorious hot sunny days.

Our **Kōrero Clubs** are mostly running again and we are offering **home visits**. Please contact your local Community Aphasia Advisor (CAA) for more information. Please note you do need to show your **vaccine passport** to receive face to face services currently.

We are very sad to say **farewell** to **Abbey** Jacobson, who has been the CAA for South Auckland for a number of years. Abbey is returning to Canada, and we wish her all the best. Thank you Abbey!

We are still **recruiting** new CAAs. I hope to provide you with details and information about new Advisors in the next newsletter. Our long-term goal is to have CAAs across as much of New Zealand as possible, with phone and Zoom support for more remote regions. Please contact us if you are an interested SLT.

This newsletter has a focus on **migraine and aphasia**. We hope you find it interesting. You can read more of Di's story on our website [here](#).

Thank you so much for your **donations** over the Christmas period. We are very grateful for these – every dollar you give is spent carefully.

Stay well and keep safe.

Until next time... Kate

AphasiaNZ's Community Aphasia Advisors (CAAs)

Auckland South – Abbey Jacobson

Email: aucklandcs@aphasia.org.nz

Auckland Central and Franklin – Linda Mains-Barnett

Email: franklin@aphasia.org.nz

Auckland North and West – Jessica Hunter-Wilson

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Waikato West Central – Christa Grbin

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Tauranga – Kate Milford

Email: tauranga@aphasia.org.nz

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Email: wellington@aphasia.org.nz

Hutt Valley and Porirua – Leanne Gibbs

Email: huttporirua@aphasia.org.nz

Christchurch – Chris Wyles

Email: christchurch@aphasia.org.nz

Otago and Southland – Fiona Couldstone

Email: dunedin@aphasia.org.nz

All CAAs work part-time hours and may not be able to respond to you immediately.

The best way to contact the office is by emailing info@aphasia.org.nz

Please note **all CAAs now use** [@aphasia.org.nz](mailto:info@aphasia.org.nz) email addresses

Gmail emails can be deleted from your address book



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AphasiaNZ Updates



Young Aphasia Group

Are you interested in joining an online group for young people with aphasia?

If you are interested or would like more information, contact Christa by calling 021 086 34362 or by emailing waikatowc@aphasia.org.nz

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Are you interested in joining an online group for young people with aphasia?

Contact: Christa Grbin
021 086 34362 | waikatowc@aphasia.org.nz

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Mindfulness course for carers

We have a few spaces left for our next planned Mindfulness course.

This course runs for 1 hour per week over 8 weeks, and is held via Zoom. Please contact the office by email or phone if you want to know more or are interested in attending. info@aphasia.org.nz or 0508 274 274



On Wed 23rd February there was a **Carer Education Event** run over Zoom. The topic was **conversation and communication skills**. Aphasia is a very challenging condition, both for the person with aphasia and those they speak with. Often family members and friends can feel a bit helpless, still wanting to have conversations with their loved one, but finding this hard.

Although there are no quick fixes when it comes to communicating after aphasia, there are a number of strategies that are known to improve conversation. These are simple changes that family members and friends can make to get the most out of conversations. But simple is not the same as easy!

During the education event Christa introduced seven simple ideas to try. There was a lot of discussion. For this reason the group only talked about the first four ideas. They decided to meet a second time, to recap what had already been discussed and to complete the last three ideas. **Our second meeting is scheduled for Wed 9th March.**

Christa received feedback from members that the session was informative. Members have also reported how helpful it was to hear from others in the same situation.

Christa plans to run another education event in term two. The dates and topics are currently being considered.

If you would like to be part of the next event please contact Christa at waikatowc@aphasia.org.nz

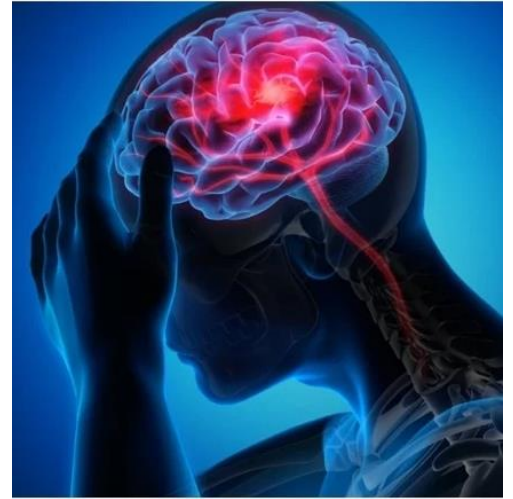


Migraine and Aphasia

A migraine is a strong headache that often comes with nausea, vomiting, and sensitivity to light.

A **hemiplegic migraine** is a rare and serious type of migraine headache.

Many of its symptoms mimic those common to stroke, such as a temporary paralysis on one side of your body, which doctors call **hemiplegia**.



Unlike a stroke, these symptoms come on slowly and build and then may completely go away. The symptoms can last for hours to days or even weeks in rare cases, but most will go away completely. Symptom severity can also vary from person to person.

There are two types of hemiplegic migraine: Familial hemiplegic migraine (runs in the family) and sporadic hemiplegic migraine (occurs only in one person with no family history).

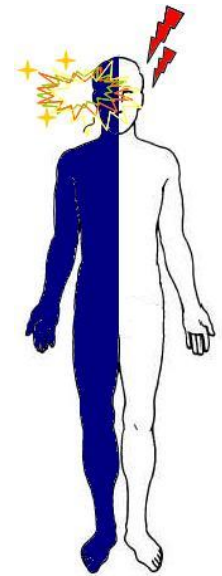
How rare is hemiplegic migraine? Who is affected?

- While migraine affects 1 billion people worldwide, hemiplegic migraine occurs in 0.01% of those cases.
- Women are three times more likely to have the condition than men.
- The average age of onset is 12 to 17 years old.
- A child of a parent with hemiplegic migraines will have a 50% chance of getting them as well.



Primary symptoms of hemiplegic migraine:

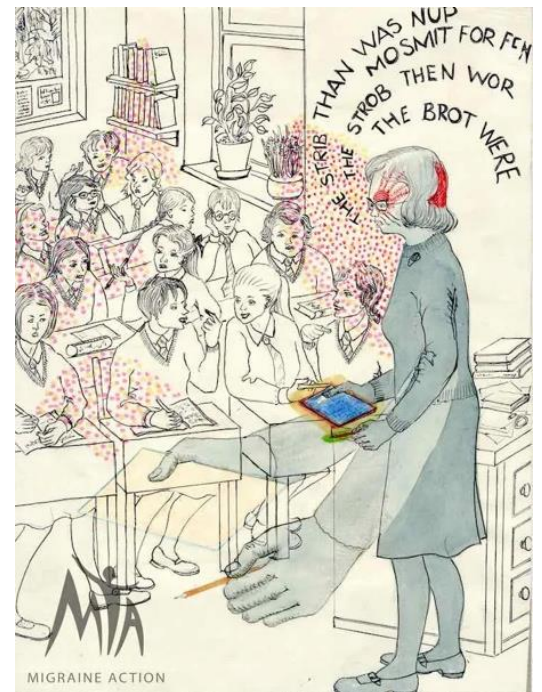
- Weakness on one side of the body (hemiplegia)
- Headache
- Aura symptoms – vision changes, numbness, tingling and **trouble speaking** (mixing words, trouble remembering a word, and slurred speech)



A person may also experience:

- Fever; changes in consciousness; problems with coordination; nausea or vomiting; increased sensitivity to sound and light

Aphasia is linked to migraine with aura and occurs in about 25 to 30% of those who experience migraine. It happens before or just as you are experiencing pain in your head and is temporary. Doctors refer to this symptom as "**transient aphasia**". This is also known as the **Migraine Babble** – the words do not come out as intended. When trying to speak, words can come out garbled and unintelligible.



What are common triggers?

Hemiplegic migraine has **various triggers**, but can also occur **randomly**. It is not always possible to identify what causes it.

Common triggers include certain foods or smells, lights, stress, too little or too much sleep, physical activity and head trauma. Physical triggers can occur due to over-dilated blood vessels and a decrease of blood flowing to the brain, or when the trigeminal nerve becomes irritated.

When to see a Doctor:

Migraine speech problems should not be ignored. If you're experiencing speech issues or trouble word-finding for the first time, contact a doctor to make sure it's not related to a more serious issue, such as a stroke.

Work with your doctor to rule out other conditions and identify a treatment plan to minimize the effect of aphasia on your daily life. Your doctor may prescribe medications to help control your migraines, and may refer you to a specialist if necessary.

The information above has been collated from a number of websites.

Click on the following links for **more information**:

- www.webmd.com
- [The American Migraine Foundation](http://TheAmericanMigraineFoundation)
- Northsuffolkneurology.com [blog](#)
- Migraineagain.com
- [Youtube video on hemiplegic migraine](#)



Di's story – My experience with Aphasia due to Migraine

In February 2002 I had a 'mini stroke'. My blood pressure was very low and the scans were clear. The doctors couldn't work out what was wrong. In May 2002 this happened again.

I couldn't stand the bright lights and the noise in the hospital. I had no speech and had to write everything down. My eyes had tunnel vision.

A Neurologist diagnosed a Hemiplegic Migrainous 'stroke'. Everything presents as a stroke, but it is not the same. My left side was completely paralysed and the left side of my face was numb. I had aphasia. My biggest problem was that with the aphasia, I could only verbalise a few words and point and gesticulate.

The migraines at this time were hideous - painless but with intense pressure and blackout or tunnel vision.

I am very grateful that today, 20 years on from when I had my first 'stroke' and suffered aphasia, I'm doing ok. I am now on medication to prevent migraines but from time to time, especially when tired, aphasia kicks in. Left side weakness has improved but never gone away. The biggest problem is that I look normal but my brain is at times addled.

I get tired very quickly. I get overwhelmed by noise and light. It is important to rest enough, and not overdo things.

COVID-19 Update

Phase 3 of the Omicron response - only confirmed cases and their household contacts are required to isolate.

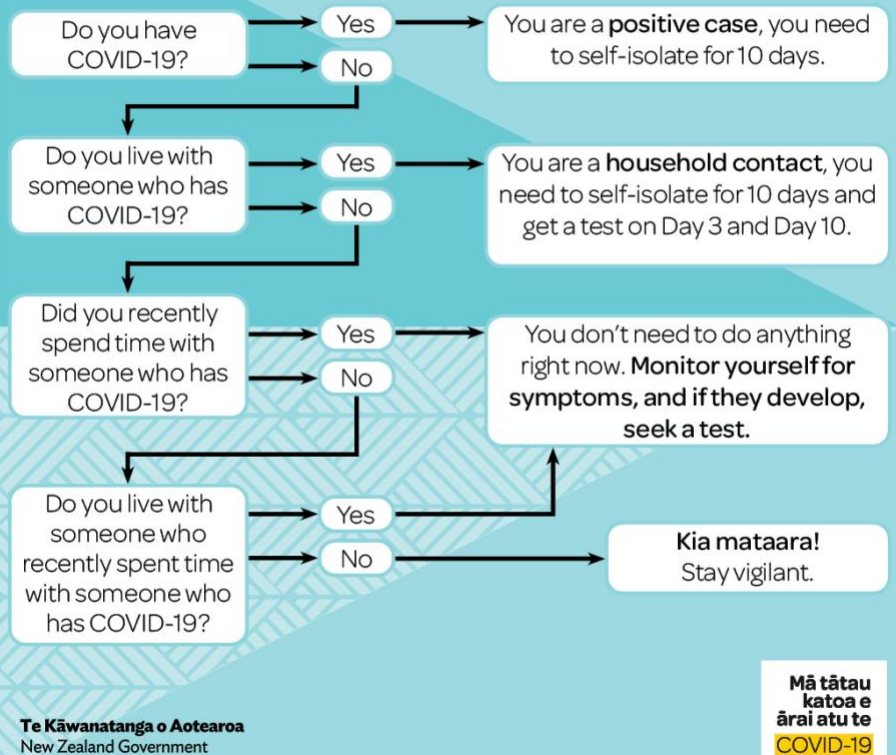
Vaccination is still required for home visits and to attend any AphasiaNZ groups.

It will be very important that you do **not attend** group if you are **unwell**, especially if you have been exposed to **COVID-19**.

If you are not vaccinated, the CAA can offer you support on the telephone or via online video call (Zoom).

Questions? Contact info@aphasia.org.nz

What type of contact are you?



Isolate if you or someone in your household have tested positive
Close contacts no longer need to isolate



Only get a test if you have symptoms or you live with someone who has COVID-19

For more information, head to:



Covid19.govt.nz



UniteAgainstCOVID19



@covid19nz



uniteagainstd19



@covid19nz



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Communication tips for coping with masks



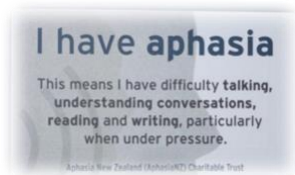
Face coverings and masks make it *even harder* for people with aphasia to communicate. Here are a few communication tips:



⇒ Have a **pen and paper** at hand. You can use this to **check things, confirm 'yes' or 'no', listing key words, or drawing pictures**



⇒ Use **props**. Show two objects or options



⇒ Use your aphasia **wallet card**



⇒ Use **gestures** such as **pointing** to things or using a **thumbs up or down to confirm 'yes' or 'no'**



⇒ Use clear straightforward language; **one idea at a time**



⇒ Allow plenty of **time**



Our Contact Details



You can get in touch with us in the following ways:

By writing to us:

AphasiaNZ, PO Box 13435, Tauranga Central, Tauranga 3141

By making an appointment and visiting us:

At 36 Cameron Road, Tauranga 3110

By calling us:

In the office on (07) 220 9973, *OR*

On our free phone number **0508 APHASIA** (0508 274 274)

By emailing us:

info@aphasia.org.nz

Through our website:

www.aphasia.org.nz

On our Facebook page:

www.facebook.com/AphasiaNZ

We look forward to hearing from you

E tatari ana matou ki te whakarongo ki a koe



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Can you Help with a Donation?



As a Charitable Trust which does not have members, we do not ask for a yearly 'membership' fee or payment.

But as you may know, we do not receive government funding and grants and donations enable us to provide all services and resources.

It is only with your help and support that we can continue to provide vital and much-used services and resources in our communities.

Can you help us by making a donation?

Donations enable us to provide Community Aphasia Advisor (CAA) field officer services across New Zealand's main centres.

Donations can be made online into the AphasiaNZ bank account, or by credit card via PayPal online. ***Cheques are no longer accepted by banks.***

As AphasiaNZ is an approved donee organisation, you can claim a 33.33% tax credit for all donations over \$5.00. [Information about tax credits from the IRD is available here.](#)

Please click here to donate online today!



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Brain Challenge

**Try this word game.
Download the app or play through the internet.**



A DAILY WORD GAME

What is Wordle?

Wordle is a free daily word game that gives you 6 chances to guess the daily 5-letter word. You can find it online [here](#).

It's fun and like a crossword, and can only be played once a day. Every 24 hours there's a new word, and it's up to you to figure out what it is.

If you have the right letter in the right spot, it shows up green. A correct letter in the wrong spot shows up yellow. A letter that isn't in the word in *any* spot shows up grey.



It is hard, but people have made easier games that are a little more **aphasia-friendly**:

- [Hello Word!](#) lets you choose the length of the word, and you can play as many times as you wish. If you don't guess one word, just go on to the next one.
- [Spellie](#) helps you out by providing the first letter of the word.



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