

the aphasia quiz

Do *you* know the facts?

Please check either true (T) or false (F) for each statement.

1. Most people are familiar with aphasia.

True False

2. Aphasia means a person has difficulty retrieving words for speech and usually has some problems reading, writing and understanding spoken language.

True False

3. The cause of aphasia is usually due to a heart attack.

True False

4. If people have aphasia they will always have significant memory loss as well.

True False

5. Aphasia is more prevalent than Parkinson's Disease or Muscular Dystrophy.

True False

6. A person with aphasia may have no noticeable physical impairment.

True False

7. All individuals with aphasia have very similar symptoms of the same approximate severity.

True False

8. Although most people with aphasia are older than 50 years of age, it is not unusual for younger people to acquire this disability.

True False

9. Some individuals with aphasia return to work, however, most are forced to retire or change jobs and work in a modified capacity.

True False

10. Recovery from aphasia is usually complete within six months of treatment.

True False



ANSWERS

1. FALSE -- Most people have never heard of aphasia. The general public frequently misinterprets the difficulties an individual with aphasia is experiencing and may react as though the person is psychologically ill or mentally retarded. Feelings of social isolation with resulting emotional effects are common to individuals with aphasia.

2. TRUE -- Aphasia is an acquired communication disorder that impairs an individual's ability to use language. The primary symptom is an inability to express oneself when speaking, however, in some cases, reading and writing or understanding of speech can be the more impaired language modality.

3. FALSE -- The most frequent cause of aphasia is a stroke (but, one can have a stroke without acquiring aphasia). It can also result from head injury, cerebral tumor or other neurological causes. Consequently, the onset is usually sudden, although rare cases of progressive aphasia in adults and childhood/developmental aphasia have been documented.

4. FALSE -- Although a person with aphasia can have difficulty retrieving words and names, memory of situations, appointments, people and general knowledge remain relatively intact. The ability to access ideas and thoughts via language is disrupted.

5. TRUE -- It has been estimated that one million Americans or 1 in 250 people have acquired aphasia. About 2/3 of these are the result of strokes and 1/3 are head injured persons.

6. TRUE -- But most people with aphasia also have right sided weakness or paralysis of the leg and arm. This occurs because the left side of the brain is the side generally damaged when a person has aphasia, and it also controls movements on the right side of the body.

7. FALSE -- There are many types of aphasia. They are generally classified as either non-fluent or fluent. Specific symptoms can vary greatly; however the commonly shared symptom is an impaired ability to use language. The severity of aphasia symptoms can range from very mild to very severe. When there is almost total impairment of all the language modalities (i.e., speaking, writing, reading, listening) the condition is referred to as global aphasia.

8. TRUE -- A widespread misconception is that only older people suffer strokes. In fact, young adults as well as children can sustain strokes, but in such instances it is usually secondary to a pre-existing medical condition.

9. TRUE -- There are very few jobs that do not require speech and language skills. Individuals with mild or even moderate aphasia are sometimes able to return to work, but often with some changes in job responsibilities and a reduced work load.

10. FALSE -- Approximately half of those who initially show symptoms of aphasia recover completely within the first few hours or days. This is known as transient aphasia. If the symptoms of aphasia persist beyond the first 2-3 months after a stroke, a complete recovery is unlikely. Increased functioning is usually achieved through spontaneous recovery and speech therapy. Recovery is a slow process that usually requires a minimum of a year of treatment including helping the individual and family understand and adjust to long term deficits.

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