

STAMMA



In adults, the question you face is how you deal with your stammer. Stammering, or stuttering, affects up to 3% of the adult population, mainly men. It isn't caused by nerves, it's mainly a neurological and often hereditary condition.

Someone who stammers will repeat, prolong or get stuck on sounds or words. There might also be signs of visible tension as they struggle to get words out. No two people stammer in the same way. Most people think of stammering as noticeable speech differences, but the thoughts and feelings about stammering can be just as important.

CAUSES

Stammering, isn't caused by nerves. It is a physical struggle to get words out, normally caused by a neurological condition where the part of the brain that processes speech behaves differently.

Stammering usually starts in childhood, affecting up to 8% of children. Most children will go on to speak fluently but up to 3%, or around 1.5 million, will continue to stammer into adulthood.

Around 60% of people who stammer have a relative who stammers or used to stammer. Most adults who stammer, around 80%, are male. More rarely it can result from a head trauma, illnesses such as Parkinson's or certain medications.

AVOIDANCE

Avoidance is common. The fear of being judged by others can lead to many people hiding their stammer. Someone who avoids stammering may:

- insert filler words (eg "um", "er") before a difficult word
- swap a difficult word for an easier one - you end up with a plain ham sandwich when you really wanted one with ham, cheese and salad
- say less in challenging speaking situations, eg at meetings or when out with a group of friends
- turn down opportunities to present or attend events, or miss the start of things when introductions are required.

Stammering is variable - there will be times when someone will stammer less and times when they stammer more.

An increase in stammering might be linked to tiredness, stress, speaking to someone in authority, using the phone or speaking in front of a group. Sometimes there's no reason to explain the variability.

SHAME & GUILT

Many who stammer experience intense feelings of guilt and shame. This is brought on by the visible struggle with talking, and by the negative responses of others: the mocking, teasing and stereotyping. It can take a while to shake off such deep-seated experiences, but meeting others who stammer, and being able to talk without worrying about stammering, can be therapeutic and life-changing.

WORK & EDUCATION

For surviving the day-to-day problems faced if you stammer, whether at work or in education, go to our website stamma.org for tips, information and ways of meeting up with others.

RING US ON 0808 802 0002
Weekdays 10am-noon; 6pm-8pm. Free. Confidential. Anonymous.

Call us to talk about anything stammering: dump about your day, talk to us about finding help, practise speech techniques or job interview questions, or talk to us about someone you love who stammers.

STAMMA

LOOKING FOR HELP?

We believe that whether someone stammers, and how they manage their stammer, is no-one's business but their own. If you want help managing your stammer, here are some ideas below.

Meet Others

There is something special about meeting others who understand your experiences, and with whom you don't need to worry at all about how you speak. Find out more under '[Connect](#)' on our website.

[BSA's Facebook Support Group](#)

This closed group is a great place to talk to others about their experiences of therapy and support.

THERAPY

If you're thinking about getting therapy, have a think and do your research. No single approach will work for everyone. What is your motivation for getting therapy now? What worked in the past and what didn't? One-to-one therapy or group therapy? How far are you prepared to travel? Are you willing to pay? Non-NHS providers will charge or you might be able to get funding via your GP. Are there other costs such as travel and accommodation? Is follow-up help on offer?

NHS

Free of charge and you can often refer yourself rather than go through your GP. Go online and search for 'Adult speech and language therapy + your location' or ring us and we'll talk you through it.

Check if they work with adults who stammer as many areas don't offer a service. If this is the case, below are some alternatives.

[Teletherapy](#)

Speech therapy via video call allows you to access therapy via Skype, Facetime or another platform. This is an alternative if there is no NHS service in your area and will depend on funding from either yourself, your employer or your local health service.

Providers include Airedale NHS Foundation Trust and Michael Palin Centre for Stammering.



GO PRIVATE

Go to helpwithtalking.org and use the advanced search to find a private therapist who specialises in working with adults who stammer. Tel: 0203 002 3704. The fee for an initial assessment is £85 - £120 and on-going sessions range between £50 - £70 per session.

COURSES

[City Lit](#)

A specialist centre in London offering adult group therapy. There are different ways to pay for the courses - yourself, via your local health service or you can get financial help through the City Lit bursary scheme. Tel: 020 7492 2578.

[The McGuire Programme](#)

Intensive residential group courses for people who stammer in different parts of the UK - you pay for the course after the first two days if you decide to stay. UK North: 07761 823461 UK South: 07838 172768.

[The Starfish Project](#)

Intensive residential group courses in East Sussex for people who stammer. Tel: 01825 767268.

There's also a free self-empowerment online course at stammeringresearch.org

OTHER THERAPIES

Different approaches can be helpful and can complement traditional therapy. We'd suggest you only get help from someone who has professional accreditation.

[Acceptance & Commitment Therapy](#)

Provided by the Association for Contextual Behavioural Science. There's also [Act Mindfully](#)

[Cognitive Behaviour Therapy](#)
[British Association for Behavioural and Cognitive Psychotherapies](#)

[Counselling](#)
[British Association for Counselling & Psychotherapy](#)
and [United Kingdom Council for Psychotherapy](#)

[Mindfulness](#)
[Be Mindful](#) and [Mindful](#)

[Hypnotherapy](#)
[The National Hypnotherapy Society](#)

[Yoga](#)
[The British Wheel of Yoga](#)

HIT A CRISIS?

There is always help out there, and often you can just talk to someone online, without the need to pick up a phone.

[The Mix](#)

The UK's leading support service for young people. Free, confidential, anonymous. Call 0808 808 4994, open daily 4pm-11pm. themix.org.uk

[CALM](#)

The Campaign Against Living Miserably, for men and boys feeling down. Confidential, anonymous, free. Call 0800 58 58 58, daily, 5pm-midnight or use their webchat service via thecalmzone.net

[Samaritans](#)

You can talk to someone, any time of the day or night and they'll listen. Call 116 123 or email jo@samaritans.org

Keep up-to-date with our campaigns, get information and support. Join us or just subscribe. It's free.
Stamma.org/join

STAMMA.ORG

British Stammering Association
15 Old Ford Rd,
London E2 9PJ
Office tel: 0208 983 1003

Reg. charity nos:
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