

TREATMENT FOR PPA

While there is no cure for PPA, both pharmacological and non-pharmacological interventions may be considered to promote quality of life. These interventions must be tailored for each individual.

Pharmacological interventions:

Physicians may prescribe medications to help with symptoms of anxiety/depression, since people living with PPA often have preserved insight into their condition and prognosis in the earlier stages. There are also medications used to treat PPA symptoms when Alzheimer's disease is the pathology.

Non-pharmacological interventions: It is important that a multidisciplinary team of professionals work together to help maximize the quality of life for the person with PPA and family members.

Social workers consider psychosocial factors that are impacting the person and family. They may provide disease education, counseling, care partner training and support, and connection with local resources.

Speech-Language Pathologists (speech therapists) can help develop specific strategies to maximize communication during daily conversations and in desired activities. Speech therapy interventions should focus upon the individual's and family's personal goals, rather than generic language exercises. Care partners should be included in the treatment sessions to help support their loved one during conversation and throughout meaningful life activities.

- Speech therapy interventions may include personalized language exercises that target words and sentences used in daily conversations. These exercises aim to strengthen existing language abilities so that important words or phrases may be more easily spoken during daily conversation.

Compensatory tools may be developed to supplement language. High-tech supports may include using a smart tablet to help with communication. Some individuals engage in “voice/message-banking,” which allows one to record their own speech in earlier stages. The stored messages may be used to help communicate when speaking becomes difficult. People with PPA may also engage in “story telling” and record personal stories on their smart device to share with others. High-tech supports aren't a good fit for everyone. Paper-based supports may include a communication book or wallet, with key words and pictures of important people, places, and topics. Care partners can write key words or pull up pictures on their phone during conversations to help support comprehension.



Care partner training on how to support their loved one during conversations is also critical. The strategies need to be modified over time to meet the individual's changing communication needs.

- Speech therapy can be helpful throughout the PPA journey. It is important that families check in with their speech therapist every 6 months to see if another round of therapy may be helpful due to language or cognitive changes that are impacting daily life.
- Occupational therapists and physical therapists may help with home safety, mobility, and activities of daily living.
- Additional therapies: Support groups, intergenerational therapy, art therapy, music therapy, pet therapy, and others may all be considered, depending on the individual's interests.

