Tips for Communicating with Your Loved One After Brain Injury

For family members, caregivers, and friends.

Cover One Topic at a Time

Trying to discuss several things at once can be overwhelming. Stay with one subject until it is fully discussed before moving on.

Choose a Quiet Setting for Important Conversations

Reduce background noise from televisions, phones, or crowded environments whenever possible. Fewer distractions can make it easier for your loved one to focus.

Give Extra Time to Respond

Your loved one may need additional time to process information and organize a response. Pause, wait, and resist the urge to answer for them.

Offer Two Choices Instead of Open-Ended Questions

Questions such as "Would you like soup or a sandwich?" are often easier to answer than broad questions like "What would you like for lunch?"

Write Down Important Information

Appointments, plans, and key details are easier to remember when they are written down. Use calendars, notes, whiteboards, or phone reminders.

Remember: If your loved one seems distracted, forgetful, slow to respond, or frustrated, it is often a symptom of the injury rather than a lack of effort or interest. Patience and understanding can go a long way.