

Speaking out

Tailored therapy helps people with Parkinson's regain normal speech

SOT

Jenna Massey, OSF HealthCare speech language pathologist

"Usually it starts with a hoarse voice. Then they start to get quieter and quieter. Sometimes they mumble or have unintelligible speech. Occasionally people will have a stutter out of nowhere. Some people will talk too fast or too slow." (:22)

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Jenna Massey, OSF HealthCare speech language pathologist

"We start out with very specific exercises like a sustained 'ahh' sound. Then we do some fluctuating sounds. Toward the end of the session, we do more conversation-based exercises. I'm monitoring their loudness and telling them if they're doing a good job or if they need to get louder." (:19)

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Jenna Massey, OSF HealthCare speech language pathologist

"In the conversation, I try to lean toward whatever they're interested in. If they talk about gardening every day, that's what we'll talk about in a session." (:08)

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Jenna Massey, OSF HealthCare speech language pathologist

"It's once a week. We do exercises as a group. We target some community activities, like ordering food. It depends on what people are having difficulty with." (:16)

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Jenna Massey, OSF HealthCare speech language pathologist

"Parkinson's and related disorders are progressive. It's never 'oh I'm good again'. They are always fighting against Parkinson's. So they always have to keep up on those exercises." (:15)

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Jenna Massey, OSF HealthCare speech language pathologist

"In the beginning, they're noticing their issues. So it can come with depression. Usually, when they're ending the program, they're feeling successful. Their mood is improved. Their personality comes out even more." (:15)