

Stuttering or normal disfluency?

What I hear, what I notice. Check for a week or two, then bring this sheet to the speech-language pathologist. This checklist is not a diagnosis.

Normal disfluency

- ☐ “um”, “like”, “you know”
- ☐ a sentence that starts over
- ☐ a phrase repeated: “I’m going, I’m going...”
- ☐ a longer word repeated once: “after, after lunch”
- ☐ relaxed, as if thinking

Signs of stuttering

- ☐ a sound or syllable repeated: “b-b-ball”
- ☐ a short word repeated: “my-my cat”
- ☐ a stretched sound: “mmmmommy”
- ☐ a block: no sound comes out
- ☐ effort or tension

Beyond the sounds

- ☐ blinking, a grimace, a head movement
- ☐ words swapped or avoided
- ☐ frustration, crying, anger
- ☐ avoids talking, whispers, says it’s too hard

Notes for the appointment

Since when? _____

Anyone in the family who stutters? _____

In which situations? (phone, groups, fatigue) _____

Languages spoken at home: _____

When to consult

Child under 4: more than 6 months, family history, your child reacts, or you’re worried

Child 4 and over: as soon as you notice stuttering

Any age: tension, frustration or avoidance, without waiting

Adult: it’s never too late

Sudden stuttering in an adult: doctor first. Call 911 if it comes with face drooping, a weak arm, or trouble speaking or understanding.

Sources: OOAQ (2021); Naître et grandir (2024); CHEO; Association bégaiement communication (2025); Heart & Stroke. General information: this checklist does not replace an assessment.