



Stroke (Brain Attack)

A **stroke** is also called a “brain attack.” With a stroke, brain cells die due to a blood clot or rupture of a blood vessel in the brain. The end result is brain damage (and possible death).

In the U.S., strokes are the 3rd leading cause of death. They are the leading cause of adult disability.

Stroke Warning Signs

Sudden numbness or weakness of the face, arm, or leg, especially on one side of the body.

Sudden confusion, trouble speaking or understanding.

Sudden trouble seeing in one or both eyes.

Sudden trouble walking, dizziness, loss of balance or coordination.

Sudden severe headache with no known cause.

Causes

Most strokes are caused by a blood clot in an artery in the neck or brain. Some are caused by bleeding into or around the brain.

Risk Factors for a Stroke

- Previous stroke or transient ischemic attack (TIA)—a temporary lack of blood supply to the brain.
- **Atrial fibrillation.** This is an irregular beating of the heart.
- High blood pressure. Cigarette smoking. Diabetes. Coronary artery disease.
- Being a male over age 70.

Questions to Ask

Does any **stroke warning sign** occur? {**Note: Call 9-1-1** without delay! Then, follow first aid listed below.}



NO

In the past, have stroke warning signs occurred briefly and then gone away?



NO



Self-Care / First Aid

First Aid before Emergency Care

- Note the time when the first sign(s) of stroke occurred. Report this time to emergency personnel. For the most common type of strokes, a clot-busting drug should be given within 3 hours of the start of symptoms.
- Do not give the person anything to eat or drink. Do not give aspirin.

Prevention

- Take medicine(s), as prescribed, to control blood pressure, blood cholesterol, diabetes, and atrial fibrillation. Aspirin may help reduce the risk of stroke in women ages 55-79 years. Discuss this with your doctor.
- Get to and stay at a healthy weight. Get regular exercise.
- Don't smoke. If you smoke, quit. Use alcohol in moderation. Manage stress.



Get more information from:

American Stroke Association
888.4.STROKE (478.7653)

www.strokeassociation.org/STROKEORG