

If you think you or someone else might be having a stroke, act F.A.S.T.! Call 911 or get to the hospital!

Face Ask the person to smile as big as they can. Does one side of the face droop?

Arms Ask the person to raise both arms. Does one arm drift downward?

Speech Ask the person to repeat a simple sentence. Are the words slurred? Can the person repeat it correctly?

Tongue /Time Ask the person to stick out their tongue. Does it deviate to one side? If the person shows any of these signs, time is important.



So what can you do?

- Be knowledgeable about strokes and share information with friends and family.
- Minimize your risk of stroke by following prevention guidelines and talking to your doctor.
- Recognise a stroke when it is occurring and seek medical attention immediately.
- Remember that strokes are a major cause of disability, but can be prevented and treated!



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Stroke



**A GUIDE TO
UNDERSTANDING,
PREVENTING, AND
RECOGNISING STROKES**



What is a stroke?

A stroke occurs when blood flow to the brain is slowed or stopped due to either a blood clot or a bleed in the brain. The brain needs the oxygen that blood carries in order to survive, and when certain areas of the brain do not receive enough oxygen during a stroke, they are damaged. The effects that a stroke has on a person depend on the severity of the stroke and which areas of the brain were affected, as different parts of the brain are responsible for controlling different parts of the body.

Are you at risk for stroke?

Do you:

- have high blood pressure (>140/90)? 
- have high cholesterol (>240)?
- smoke? 
- think you are overweight?
- exercise very little? 
- have an irregular heart beat or racing heart?
- have a history of stroke in your family? 
- have >2 alcoholic drinks per day?

It is estimated that up to 80% of strokes are preventable! If you have checked **yes** to any of these questions, check with your doctor on how to lower your risk for stroke!

Signs and symptoms of a stroke include:

SUDDEN

- ⇒ **Numbness or weakness of face, arm, or leg—especially on one side of the body**
- ⇒ **Confusion; trouble speaking or understanding**
- ⇒ **Trouble seeing in one or both eyes**
- ⇒ **Trouble walking, dizziness, or loss of balance**
- ⇒ **Severe headache**

Treatment

Early treatment for a stroke can help minimize damage to the brain and reduce its effects, such as weakness and difficulty speaking. The long-term goals of treatment include the prevention of additional strokes and rehabilitation to help with recovery. Your physician might prescribe medications to control other conditions that are risk factors for stroke and/or recommend some healthy lifestyle changes to lower your risk, such as a healthier diet and exercise. It is important to take these medications as directed and follow your doctor's advice!

