



Stroke is the 5th leading cause of death in the United States, yet over 80% of strokes are preventable

FACTS

- About **795,000 people** have a stroke every year in the U.S.
- Every **40 seconds**, someone in the US has a stroke, and every **4 minutes** someone dies of a stroke.
- A stroke is more **disabling** than it is fatal.
- Stroke is more common in **women** than it is in men (particularly women taking hormones).
- Your **ethnicity** may increase your risk for stroke.
- Your risk of stroke **doubles** for every 10 years after age 55.

WHAT IS A STROKE?

- A stroke is when blood supply to a part of the brain is blocked, or when a blood vessel in the brain tears or bursts, resulting in damaged brain cells.
- The brain requires oxygen-rich blood to function properly. Without it, brain cells die within minutes. This may cause long-term brain damage, disability, or even death.
- The brain controls every process in the body, from vision and speech, to personality, mood, and sensation.
- The long-term effects of a stroke depend on where in the brain the stroke occurred and how long the brain was under stress.
- For more general information on stroke, you can visit: www.strokeassociation.org

SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS OF A STROKE

Know the signs and symptoms of a stroke. It is important to ensure that medical help is received *immediately*.

The acronym '**FAST**' may help you quickly recognize a stroke.

- **F**ace – does one side of the face droop? Does it feel weak or numb?
- **A**rms – does one arm drift down when trying to raise both arms? Is there weakness in one of the arms?
- **S**peech – does the speech seem impaired? Are the words slurred?
- **T**ime – call 911 immediately and seek medical attention. The faster you are treated, the more likely you are to recover.

TYPES OF STROKE

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HEMORRHAGIC STROKE (Bleeding Stroke)

- A hemorrhagic stroke is when a blood vessel bursts in the brain and causes the blood to build up, damaging the surrounding brain tissue.
- Hemorrhagic strokes are responsible for about 40% of all stroke deaths, although they account for only 13% of all strokes.
- Major causes of hemorrhagic stroke include: uncontrolled high blood pressure, trauma, certain medications, and abnormal formations in the blood vessel.

ISCHEMIC STROKE (Blockage Stroke)

- A blockage stroke occurs when blood clots or fatty deposits called plaques block the blood flow to the brain.
- Ischemic strokes account for about 87% of all strokes.
- An ischemic stroke due to a blood clot most often occurs in patients with an irregular heartbeat called atrial fibrillation (Afib).
- An ischemic stroke due to a plaque is often seen in people with high cholesterol.

TRANSIENT ISCHEMIC ATTACK (Mini or Warning Stroke)

- Transient ischemic attacks (TIA) are like ischemic strokes, but usually last less than 5 minutes.
- Emergency help should be called immediately even if symptoms go away.
- 40% of people that have a TIA will have an actual stroke.
- Almost half of all strokes occur within the first few days after a TIA.

HOW DO YOU PREVENT A STROKE?

About 80% of strokes are preventable.

Ask your doctor about your risk and about the following tips that may help reduce your risk of stroke:

- Don't smoke; smokers have up to 4 times the risk of stroke compared to non-smokers.
- Manage your high blood pressure; 77% of stroke patients have blood pressure above 140/90 mmHg.
- Lower your cholesterol.
- Keep your blood sugar controlled.
- Be active; moderate to vigorous physical activity can reduce your stroke risk by 35%.
- Maintain a healthy weight and choose to eat healthy.
- Get regular check-ups and follow your doctor's advice.

STROKE RECOVERY

Be patient with yourself. Recovery can be a slow and frustrating experience.

Lasting effects that can be expected from a stroke:

- Weakness on one side
- Difficulty speaking or swallowing
- Issues with memory or judgement
- Personality changes or emotions and behaviors that are difficult to explain
- Vision problems

These can improve with a rehab program and therapy.

If you are a caregiver for a stroke survivor, don't forget to care for yourself and seek help if needed.



EMI Health and Veridicus Health care about your health and well-being. If you have healthcare questions, contact our team of registered nurses, mental health professionals, clinical pharmacists, and wellness coaches.

Please contact us at 1-855-586-2568.

We are available Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. MT.

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References available upon request