

ABCs of Health



Stroke

AWARENESS...

Every 45 seconds, someone in America has a stroke. About 700,000 Americans will have a stroke this year. Stroke is our nation's No. 3 killer and a leading cause of severe, long-term disability.

It affects the arteries leading to and within the brain. A stroke occurs when a blood vessel that carries oxygen and nutrients to the brain is either blocked by a clot or bursts. When that happens, part of the brain cannot get the blood (and oxygen) it needs, so it starts to die.

2 Types of Stroke:

- **Ischemic** - Clots that block an artery cause. This is the most common type of stroke, accounting for approximately 88 percent of all strokes.
- **Hemorrhagic** - Ruptured blood vessels or bleeding strokes.

What are the Risk Factors you *can't* change?

- **Increasing age** - The older you are the greater your risk.
- **Sex (gender)** - Stroke is more common in men than in women.
- **Heredity (family history) and race** - Your stroke risk is greater if a parent, grandparent, sister or brother has had a stroke. African Americans have a much higher risk of death from a stroke than Caucasians do. This is partly because blacks have higher risks of high blood pressure, diabetes and obesity.
- **Prior stroke or heart attack** - Someone who has had a stroke is at much higher risk of having another one.

BEHAVIOR...

Learn to Recognize a Stroke – Because Time Lost is Brain Lost!

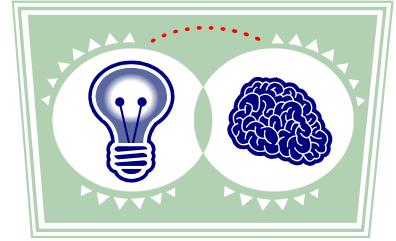
- Sudden numbness or weakness of the face, arm or leg, especially on one side of the body
- Sudden confusion, trouble speaking or understanding
- Sudden trouble seeing in one or both eyes
- Sudden trouble walking, dizziness, loss of balance or coordination



Right Brain vs. Left Brain

If the stroke occurs in the brain's right side, the left side of the body (and the right side of the face) will be affected, which could produce any or all of the following:

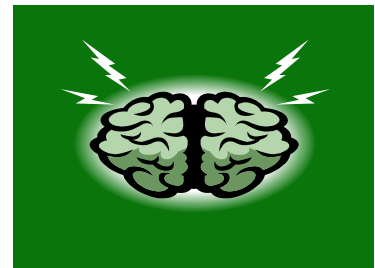
- Paralysis on the left side of the body
- Vision problems
- Quick, inquisitive behavioral style
- Memory loss



Left Brain

If the stroke occurs in the left side of the brain, the right side of the body (and the left side of the face) will be affected, producing some or all of the following:

- Paralysis on the right side of the body
- Speech/language problems
- Slow, cautious behavioral style
- Memory loss
- Sudden, severe headache with no known cause



CHANGE...

What risk factors can be controlled or treated?

- **High blood pressure** — High blood pressure (**140/90 mm Hg or higher**) is the most important risk factor for stroke.
- **Tobacco use** — Cigarette smoking is a major, preventable risk factor for stroke. **If you smoke, get help to quit NOW!**
- **Diabetes mellitus** — Diabetes is defined as a fasting, plasma glucose (blood sugar) of 126 mg/dL or more.
- **High blood cholesterol** — A high level of total cholesterol in the blood (240 mg/dL or higher) is a major risk factor for heart disease, which raises your risk of stroke.
- **Physical inactivity and obesity** — Being inactive, obese or both can increase your risk stroke.
- **Excessive alcohol** — Drinking an average of more than one alcoholic drink a day for women or more than two drinks a day for men can raise blood pressure and may increase risk for stroke.



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