

Learn About Stroke and B.E. F.A.S.T.

What is a stroke?

A stroke, or brain attack, occurs when blood flow to the brain is interrupted by a blocked or burst blood vessel. Brain cells can die from decreased blood flow and the resulting lack of oxygen. Stroke is a leading cause of disability and the fifth leading cause of death in the United States.

There are two categories of stroke.

- The first and most common type, **ischemic stroke**, is caused by a blockage of a blood vessel in the brain or neck. A blockage can stem from three conditions:
 - The formation of a clot within a blood vessel of the brain or neck, called a thrombus
 - The movement of a clot from another part of the body such as the heart to the neck or brain, called an embolism
 - A severe narrowing of an artery in or leading to the brain, called stenosis
- The second type, **hemorrhagic stroke**, occurs when there is bleeding in the brain or the spaces surrounding the brain.

How can I lower my risk of stroke?

The good news is 80 percent of strokes are preventable! Healthy lifestyle changes will help you feel and look better. Now is the time to make up your mind to take some control over your future. You may find that once you make one change, the next change comes more easily.

Here are some steps to take to reduce your risk factors:

- Do not smoke and avoid second hand smoke
- Manage your blood pressure (BP). Have your BP checked regularly and work with your doctor to control it if it is too high
(**Normal BP:** less than 120/80, **High BP (Stage I):** 130-139/80-89, **High BP (Stage II):** 140/90 or higher)
- A healthy diet and being physically active can help you maintain a healthy weight
- Have regular medical checkups
- Work closely with your doctor and take your medications exactly as prescribed by your doctor to control high blood pressure, high cholesterol, irregular heart beat (atrial fibrillation) or diabetes
- Limit alcohol to one drink or less a day and if you do not drink, do not start

How do I stop smoking?

- Make an agreement with yourself to quit and reward yourself
- Ask your doctor or nurse for information and programs that may help
- Fight the urge by going where smoking isn't allowed, and avoid being around people who smoke

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How do I change my eating habits?

- Ask your doctor, nurse or licensed nutritionist for help
- Drink more water
- Eat fruits, vegetables, whole grains, beans, nuts, seeds, fish, skinless poultry, lean meats, healthy fats, low-fat, and fat-free dairy products
- Avoid sweets and saturated fat (such as fatty meats, skin-on chicken, butter, and cream)
- Limit use of salt (use vinegar, lemon juice, hot red pepper flakes, garlic, and onions instead)
- Cook and eat at home (bake, broil, grill, roast, and poach . Try to avoid/limit fried foods)
- Eat reasonable portions

What about physical activity?

Regular physical activity reduces your risk of heart attack and stroke

- It helps control your weight and blood pressure, helps you relax, and can improve your mood!
- If you have been inactive for a long time, check with your doctor before you start
- Start slow and build up to a total of 30 to 60 minutes on most or all days of the week
- Look for chances to be more active:
 - Park farther away at the shopping mall
 - Take stairs instead of an elevator
 - Go for a short walk after meals
 - Work in the garden or rake leaves

How can I remember to take my medicine?

- Take it at the same time every day
- Use a weekly pill box with separate compartments for each day or time of day
- Leave notes to remind yourself

B.E. F.A.S.T. for Stroke

With stroke, time lost is brain lost.

If you or someone you know is experiencing symptoms of a stroke that came on suddenly, remember to **B.E. F.A.S.T.**

Balance	Is the person having trouble walking? Loss of balance or coordination, dizziness
Eyes	Is the person having trouble seeing? Change in vision in one or both eyes
Face	Ask the person to smile. Does the smile look even? Face looks uneven, droopy or is numb
Arms	Ask the person to raise both arms. Does one arm drop down? Weakness or numbness in one arm or one leg
Speech	Does the person have trouble speaking or seem confused? Slurred or difficult speech
Time	Time Lost = Brain Lost

Note the time symptoms start and call **9-1-1** immediately

Another symptom could be an unfamiliar or sudden severe headache

Call 9-1-1 immediately if you experience one of these warning signs and ask to be taken to

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For more information on strokes or reducing your risk factors,
please call **xxx-xxx-xxx** or visit yourwebsitehere.com.