



## **Stroke Fact Sheet**

### **What is a Stroke?**

A stroke, sometimes called a brain attack, occurs when something blocks blood supply to part of the brain or when a blood vessel in the brain bursts. A stroke can cause lasting brain damage, long-term disability, or even death.

### **What Causes a Stroke?**

If something happens to block the flow of blood, brain cells start to die within minutes because they can't get oxygen - this causes a stroke.

### **Signs & Symptoms**

- Sudden **numbness** or weakness in the face, arm, or leg, especially on one side of the body
  - Sudden **confusion**, trouble speaking, or difficulty understanding speech
  - Sudden **trouble seeing** in one or both eyes
  - Sudden **trouble walking**, dizziness, loss of balance, or lack of coordination
  - Sudden **severe headache** with no known cause
- Call 9-1-1 right away if you or someone else has any of these symptoms.

### **What You Should Know About Strokes**

- African Americans, Hispanics, American Indians, and Alaska Natives may be more likely to have a stroke than non-Hispanic whites or Asians.
- Having a history of previous stroke or transient ischemic attack, high blood pressure, high cholesterol, heart disease, diabetes, and sickle cell disease.
- Being overweight - especially around the abdomen (stomach) increases your risks for stroke.
- Unhealthy Diet; Diets high in saturated fats, trans fat, and cholesterol increases your risks.
- Family History of strokes increases your risk.
- Being physically active less than 3 times a week increases your risks.
- Stroke is more common in women than men.
- Pregnancy and use of birth control pills pose special stroke risks for women.

**Source:** [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#)