

Recognize the symptoms and remember to B.E. F.A.S.T!

Balance (Loss of balance, headache, dizziness)

Eyes (Blurred vision)

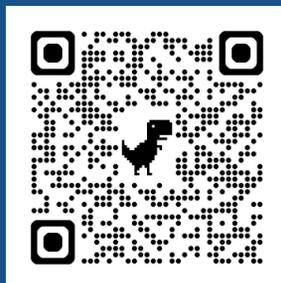
Face (Ask the individual to smile, is their smile crooked or uneven?)

Arms (Weakness in the arms)

Speech (Difficulty speaking, or slurring of words)

Time (Every second counts! Call 911)

Scan the QR code below to visit the AHA website to learn more, and to find connections to support groups for stroke survivors and their families



Stroke Prevention



How are strokes diagnosed?

Strokes are diagnosed through radiological imaging such as a Computed Tomography (CT), Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI), and Computed Tomography Angiography (CTA).

A CT is the #1 choice of diagnostic testing in a suspected stroke patient as it's a relatively quick test compared to the others listed above. This test can also differentiate between an ischemic vs hemorrhagic stroke. An MRI takes a bit longer than a CT scan, but can diagnose ischemic strokes. A CTA uses injectable contrast dye through an IV, and allows for visualization of blood vessels to identify narrowing or blockages.

How are strokes treated?

Ischemic strokes- Thrombolytic therapy called tPA (tissue plasminogen activator) or "clot buster" are used. This medication breaks apart the clot causing the stroke. Time is key for the drug as it must be administered within 3 hours of onset of symptoms to be effective. Endovascular therapy can also be used. In this procedure a small tube is placed into the blood vessel(s) in the brain where the clot is, mesh netting is attached to the tube and will be deployed grasping the clot. Once the clot is secured the tube is removed. Hemorrhagic strokes- Once the patient reaches the emergency room the first treatment is to lower their blood pressure. Based on the type of hemorrhagic stroke, surgery may be an option.

What is a stroke?

A stroke is an interruption of blood flow in the brain that causes damage. This is a medical emergency!

What are the types of stroke?

The two types of strokes are ischemic and hemorrhagic

Ischemic Stroke

Ischemic stroke makes up 87% of all strokes that occur. With an ischemic stroke there is partial or complete inadequate blood flow. These interruptions are labeled thrombotic- meaning a blood clot blocks flow of blood to the brain, and embolic- meaning a fatty plaque or a blood clot breaks away (embolizes) and flows to the brain where it blocks an artery.

Hemorrhagic Stroke

Hemorrhagic strokes make 13% of all strokes. Hemorrhagic stroke also has a few types of classifications: intracerebral, intraparenchymal (these are strokes that cause bleeding into brain tissues), and subarachnoid hemorrhage, and intraventricular hemorrhage (which is a stroke that causes bleeding into the ventricles or subarachnoid space). The bleeding occurs from a ruptured blood vessel in the brain.

Am I at risk for a stroke?

- Is your BP >120/80 mmHg?
 - Have you been diagnosed with Atrial Fibrillation?
 - Is your blood sugar >100 mg/dL?
 - Is your body mass index > 25?
 - Is your diet high in saturated fat, trans fat, sweetened beverages, salt, excess calories?
 - Is your total blood cholesterol >160 mg/dL?
 - Have you been diagnosed with diabetes mellitus?
 - Do you get less than 150 minutes of moderate to vigorous-intensity activity per week?
 - Do you have a personal or family history of stroke, TIA or heart attack?
 - Do you use tobacco or vape?
- *If you answered yes to these questions you may be at risk for developing a stroke **Talk to your healthcare provider about your risks

Prevention of stroke

The best prevention of stroke is changing lifestyle habits and eliminating risk factors. Some risk factors however cannot be changed, such as age, gender, ethnicity, and race.

Risk factors that can be changed include: lowering your blood pressure if you have hypertension, managing blood sugar levels, lowering cholesterol levels, stop smoking, increasing sedentary lifestyles- exercise for 30 mins/day 5 days a week, avoid drug use, and limit alcohol intake.

Statistics

- On average, 800,000 strokes occur each year in the U.S.
- 7 million Americans have had a stroke
- Stroke is the 5th leading cause of death in the U.S.