

Delaware Hypertension Control Network

National Stroke Awareness Month
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National Stroke Awareness Month

May



B.E.F.A.S.T

- B – Balance: Sudden trouble walking or dizziness
- E – Eyes: Sudden vision problems
- F – Face: Facial drooping
- A – Arm: Arm or leg weakness
- S – Speech: Slurred or hard-to-understand speech
- T – Time: Call 911 immediately

Why Stroke Awareness Matters

Stroke is a leading cause of death and long-term disability

Someone in the U.S. has a stroke about every 40 seconds

Many strokes are preventable and treatable if recognized early

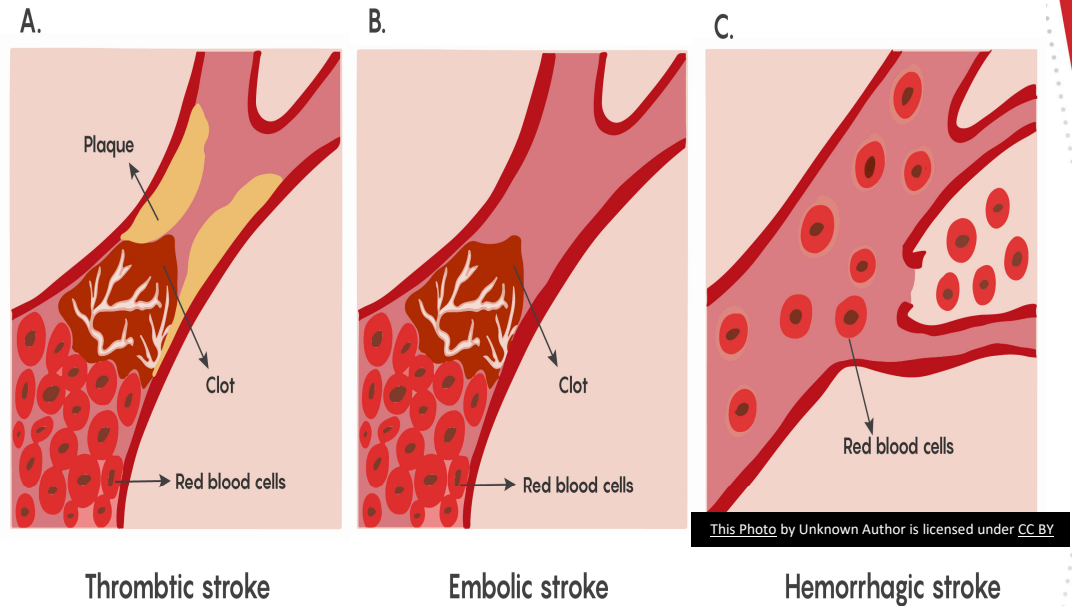


What Is a Stroke?

A stroke happens when blood flow to the brain is blocked, or a blood vessel bursts

Brain cells begin to die within minutes

Time-sensitive emergency—every minute matters



Stroke Types: Symptom Comparison

Feature	Thrombotic Stroke	Embolic Stroke	Hemorrhagic Stroke
What's happening	Clot forms in a brain artery	Clot travels from elsewhere (often heart) to brain	Blood vessel ruptures and bleeds
Type of stroke	Ischemic	Ischemic	Hemorrhagic
Symptom onset	Gradual or stepwise	Sudden and immediate	Sudden and severe
Symptom progression	Worsens over minutes or hours	Max severity at onset	Rapid worsening
Common warning signs	Weakness, numbness, speech difficulty	Sudden paralysis, speech loss, vision loss	Severe headache, nausea, confusion
Headache common?	Rare	Rare	Very common ("worst headache")
Loss of consciousness	Uncommon	Uncommon	More common
Seizures	Rare	Rare	More likely
Key symptom clue	Symptoms may creep or progress	Symptoms hit all at once	Headache + rapid decline
BE FAST applies?	✓ Yes	✓ Yes	✓ Yes
Action needed	Call 911 immediately	Call 911 immediately	Call 911 immediately

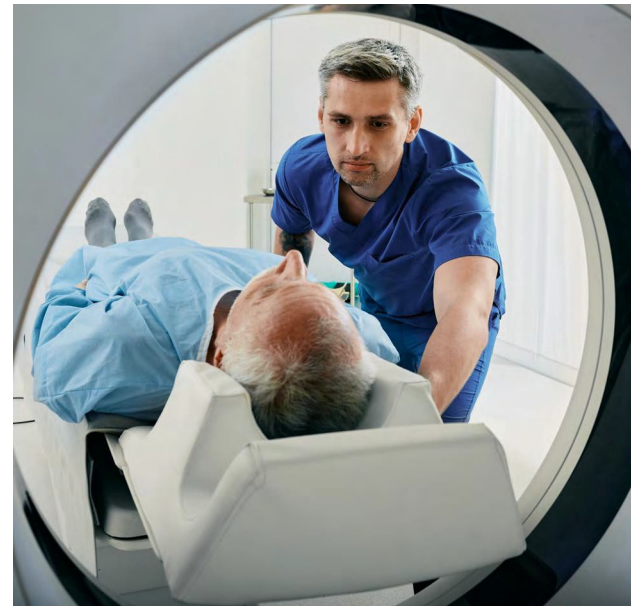


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Stroke Diagnosis

- Quick diagnosis helps guide the right treatment
- Emergency team asks when the symptoms started
- Reviews medical history
- Performs a physical and neurological exam
- Runs blood tests
- Uses CT or MRI brain scans to identify stroke type
- Early diagnosis helps treatment start as quickly as possible



Stroke Risk Factors

Non-modifiable Risk Factors:



Age:

While strokes can occur at any age, risk increases after age 55.



Gender

Women have a lower risk than men before menopause, but more women than men die of stroke.



Family history:

Strokes appear to have a genetic link. You face a higher risk if an immediate family member has had a stroke.



Prior stroke or transient ischemic attack (TIA)

- A person who's had TIA has a one in three more likelihood of having a stroke than someone of the same age and sex who hasn't.
- If you had a stroke, it means you are at a greater risk for another stroke. Almost 1 in 4 will experience a recurrent stroke in the next 5 years.



Race and Ethnicity:

Black people have a higher prevalence of stroke and a higher death rate from stroke than any other racial group.

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Stroke Risk Factors

Medical Risk Factors



High Blood Pressure:

Measurement of 120/80 mm Hg and above is considered high blood pressure. You need to work with your health care professional to manage your blood pressure. Talk to your doctor as your number may be different for someone over 65.



Diabetes:

Having diabetes more than doubles your risk of stroke. High blood glucose increases plaque buildup and damage in your arteries.



Cholesterol:

Buildup of fatty deposits and other cells in artery walls.



Circulation Problems:

Strokes can be caused by blockage in your arteries and veins that carry blood through your heart to your brain.



Atrial Fibrillation (AFib):

AFib increases stroke risk fivefold.

Stroke Risk Factors

Lifestyle Risk Factors



Quit Tobacco Use and Vaping:

Current smokers have a 2 to 4 times increased risk of stroke compared with nonsmokers or those who have quit smoking more than 10 years ago.



Eliminate or Reduce Alcohol Use:

Heavy drinking can increase your risk for stroke. Recommendation is no more than two drinks per day for men and no more than one drink per day for non-pregnant women. Pregnant people should not drink alcohol.



Maintain a Healthy Weight:

Obesity and excessive weight can put a strain on the entire circulatory system.



Increased Physical Activity:

Physical activity can help reduce stroke risk. A brisk 30 minute walk each day can improve daily health (that's just 15 minutes each way). Aim for at least 150 minutes of moderate to vigorous-intensity physical activity per week.



Eat a Healthy Diet:

- Rich in fresh fruit, vegetables and whole grains
- include a variety of proteins (lean meats, fish, beans, tofu)
- Minimally processed foods
- Limit salt intake
- Limit intake of added sugars
- Avoid fried foods

More Tips to be Healthier and Reduce Your Risk of Stroke



Take your
medications
as directed.



Reduce stress,
which may contribute to
behaviors such as overeating,
lack of physical activity,
unhealthy diet and smoking.



Have regular
medical checkups,
including assessment of
your risk for stroke.



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Healthy for Good™

Life's Essential 8™



Improving and maintaining cardiovascular health, or CVH, can help you enjoy a longer, healthier life. Better CVH also has been associated with decreased risk for heart disease, stroke, cancer, dementia and other major health problems.

Life's Essential 8 outlines a few easy steps you can take to live a healthier lifestyle.



✓ EAT BETTER

Aim for an overall healthy eating pattern that includes whole foods, lots of fruits and vegetables, lean protein, nuts, seeds and cooking in non-tropical oils such as olive and canola.

✓ MANAGE WEIGHT

Achieving and maintaining a healthy weight has many benefits. Body mass index (BMI), a numerical value of your weight in relation to your height, is a useful gauge. Optimal BMI for most adults ranges from 18.5 to less than 25. You can calculate it online or consult a health care professional.



✓ BE MORE ACTIVE

Adults should participate in 150 minutes of moderate or 75 minutes of vigorous physical activity. Walking is great for moderate levels of activity. Kids should have 60 minutes every day, including play and structured activities.

✓ CONTROL CHOLESTEROL

High levels of non-HDL, or "bad," cholesterol can lead to heart disease. Your health care professional can consider non-HDL cholesterol as the preferred number to monitor, rather than total cholesterol, because it can be measured without fasting beforehand and is reliably calculated among all people.



✓ QUIT TOBACCO

Use of inhaled nicotine delivery products, which includes traditional cigarettes, e-cigarettes and vaping, is the leading cause of preventable death in the U.S., including about a third of all deaths from heart disease. And about a third of U.S. children ages 3–11 are exposed to secondhand smoke or vaping.

✓ MANAGE BLOOD SUGAR

Most of the food we eat is turned into glucose (or blood sugar) that our bodies use as energy. Over time, high levels of blood sugar can damage your heart, kidneys, eyes and nerves. As part of testing, monitoring hemoglobin A1c can better reflect long-term control in people with diabetes or prediabetes.



✓ GET HEALTHY SLEEP

Getting a good night's sleep every night is vital to cardiovascular health. Adults should aim for an average of 7–9 hours, and babies and kids need more depending on their age. Too little or too much sleep is associated with heart disease, studies show.

✓ MANAGE BLOOD PRESSURE

Keeping your blood pressure within acceptable ranges can keep you healthier longer. Levels less than 120/80 mm Hg are optimal. High blood pressure is defined as 130–139 mm Hg systolic pressure (the top number in a reading) or 80–89 mm Hg diastolic pressure (bottom number).



Learn more at heart.org/lifes8

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Stroke Education & Awareness in Practice

Educating Patients & Helping Them Understand Stroke Warning Signs



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Why Stroke Education Matters

- Stroke Is a Medical Emergency
- Stroke is a leading cause of disability and death
- Quick action saves lives and brain function
- Many patients delay calling 911
- High blood pressure and diabetes increase stroke risk

Who Is at Higher Risk?

Patients Who Need Extra Education

- High blood pressure
- Diabetes
- Prior stroke or TIA
- Heart disease
- Smoking
- Older adults and underserved populations



B.E. F.A.S.T. is how we come *together* to end stroke®

Learn the stroke warnings signs

B.E. F.A.S.T.

Balance
Loss

Eye (Vision)
Changes

Face
Drooping

Arm
Weakness

Speech
Difficulty

Time to
Call 911

Every 40 seconds, someone in the U.S. has a stroke.

It could happen on your street, at your workplace, or in a store where you shop — anywhere. Knowing how to recognize the warning signs and acting quickly can save a life and help prevent long-term disability.

Calling 911 is the fastest way to get stroke care. EMS can begin treatment immediately and alert the hospital stroke team before you arrive. That's why it's so important to learn the stroke warning signs and urge everyone you know to do the same.

The faster stroke is treated, the more likely the patient is to recover.

In fact, stroke patients who are treated with a clot-busting drug IV t-PA Alteplase or Tenecteplase (TNK) within 4.5 hours of their first symptoms were more likely to recover with little or no disability.

In some cases, a procedure to remove the clot causing the stroke is also recommended. Ninety-one percent of stroke patients who were treated with a stent retriever within 150 minutes of first symptoms recovered with little or no disability.

The thing to remember is that stroke is largely treatable. It's a matter of getting the right treatment, right away.



**HCA + Healthcare®
FOUNDATION**

The HCA Healthcare Foundation is a national supporter of Together to End Stroke.

stroke.org

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Other Stroke Warning Signs

Not All Strokes Look the Same

- Sudden trouble seeing
- Sudden dizziness or loss of balance
- Sudden confusion
- Sudden severe headache with no cause

What Patients Should Do

- Call 911 right away
- Do not drive yourself
- Do not wait for symptoms to pass
- Tell EMS when symptoms started



How We Teach Stroke Awareness in Practice

Simple, Repetitive, Clear

- Use plain language
 - Teach BEFAST regularly
 - Use teach-back
 - Provide handouts and visuals
 - Include caregivers and family
-
- <https://www.stroke.org/en/professionals/stroke-resource-library/order-educational-brochures>



Prevention Message to Reinforce

Lowering Stroke Risk

- Control blood pressure
- Manage diabetes
- Take medications as prescribed
- Monitor BP at home if recommended
- Quit smoking
- Stay physically active



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Key Takeaways

What We Want Patients to Remember

- Stroke can happen suddenly
- Know BEFAST
- One symptom = call 911
- Acting fast saves lives
- Managing BP and diabetes reduces risk

Call to Action

Our Role

- Make stroke education routine
- Repeat the message often
- Empower patients to act quickly

Awareness Tools

• [Printable 3-Sided Tabletop Sign \(11"x17"\)](#) PDF

• B.E. F.A.S.T. Infographic PDF [[English](#) | [Spanish](#)]

• Stroke Risk in Women Infographic PDF [[English](#) | [Spanish](#)]

[American Stroke Month Toolkit Resources | American Heart Association](#)



By learning the B.E. F.A.S.T. warning signs, you just might save a life from stroke.



Every 40 seconds, someone in the U.S. has a stroke.

It could happen on your street, in your workplace, at a store where you shop — anywhere. Your readiness to spot a stroke and call 911 as soon as possible can mean the difference between life and death and recovery or disability. That's why it's so important to learn stroke warning signs and urge everyone you know to do the same.



stroke.org/warningsigns

stroke.org/warningsigns



stroke.org/warningsigns

May is AMERICAN STROKE MONTH

We're proud to follow the American Heart Association[®] and American Stroke Association[®] guidelines for stroke care.

Take a moment to review this information. Share with your friends and family to better respond to and prevent strokes.



American Heart Association.

8 key measures for improving and maintaining cardiovascular health

Better cardiovascular health helps lower the risk of stroke and other major health problems.



**Eat Better
Be More Active
Quit Tobacco
Get Healthy Sleep
Manage Weight
Control Cholesterol
Manage Blood Sugar
Manage Blood Pressure**

heart.org/lifes8

Fold along this line and tape

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Thank you!



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