

# **Stroke Awareness**

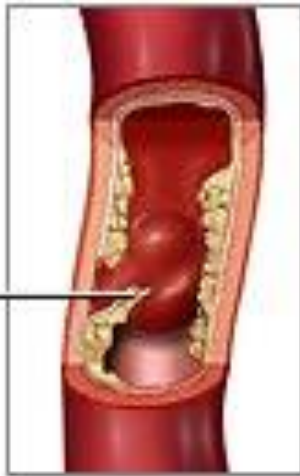
# STROKE

- What is a stroke?
  - Symptoms
    - Types
  - Prevention

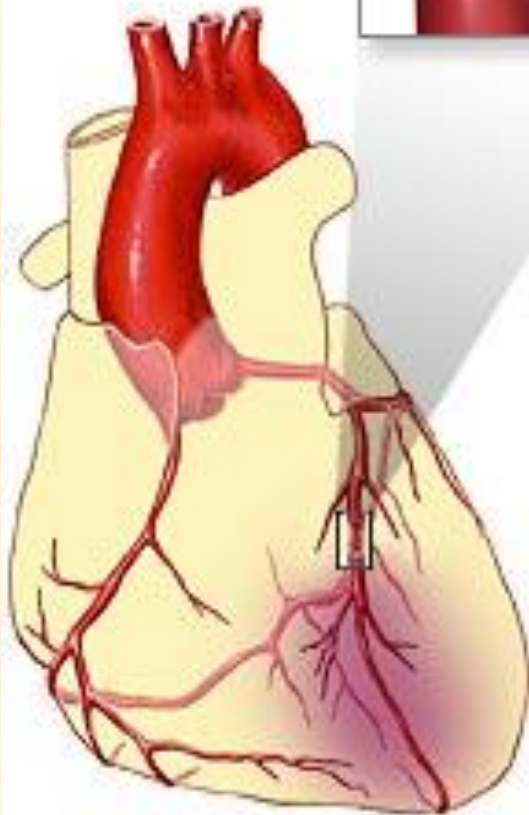
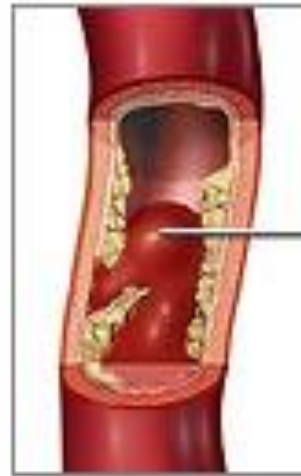
# What is a stroke?

- A stroke is an interruption of the blood supply to any part of the brain. A stroke is sometimes called a "brain attack."

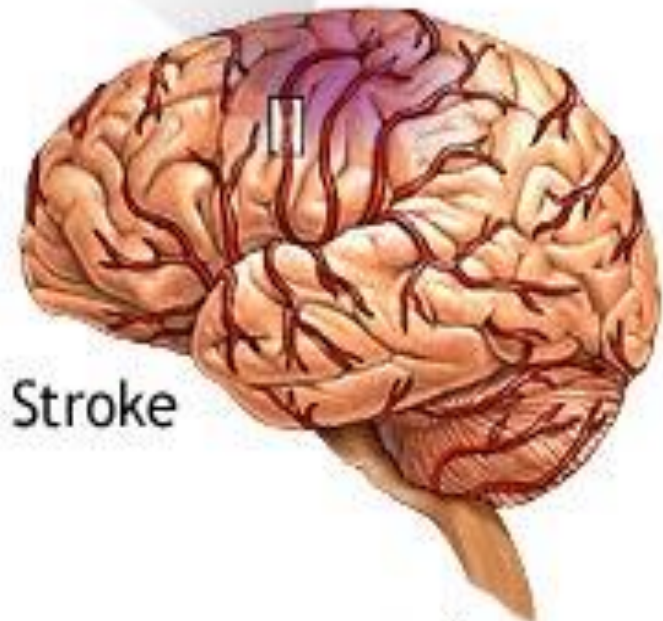
Unstable  
plaque  
ruptures




Blood clot  
blocks  
blood flow




Heart  
attack



Stroke

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- A stroke happens when blood flow to a part of the brain is interrupted because a blood vessel in the brain is blocked or bursts open.
  - If blood flow is stopped for longer than a few seconds, the brain cannot get blood and oxygen. Brain cells can die, causing permanent damage.
  - There are two major types of stroke: ischemic stroke and hemorrhagic stroke.

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- High blood pressure is the number one risk factor for strokes. The following also increase your risk for stroke:
  - [Atrial fibrillation](#)
  - [Diabetes](#)
  - Family history of stroke
  - [Heart disease](#)
  - [High cholesterol](#)
  - Increasing age

- Certain medications make blood clots more likely, and therefore increase your chances for a stroke. Birth control pills can increase the chances of having blood clots, especially in woman who smoke and who are older than 35.
- Men have more strokes than women. However, women have a higher risk of stroke during pregnancy and in the weeks immediately after pregnancy.
- The following can increase the risk of bleeding into the brain, which makes you more likely to have a stroke:
  - Alcohol use
  - Bleeding disorders
  - Cocaine use
  - Head injury

# Symptoms

- The symptoms of stroke depend on what part of the brain is damaged. In some cases, a person may not even be aware that he or she has had a stroke.
- Symptoms usually develop suddenly and without warning, or they may occur on and off for the first day or two. Symptoms are usually most severe when the stroke first happens, but they may slowly get worse.
- A [headache](#) may occur, especially if the stroke is caused by bleeding in the brain. The headache:
  - Starts suddenly and may be severe
  - Occurs when lying flat
  - Wakes you up from sleep
  - Gets worse when you change positions or when you bend, strain, or cough



# Stroke Myths

- **Myth** Stroke is unpreventable
- **Reality** Stroke is largely preventable
- **Myth** Stroke cannot be treated
- **Reality** Stroke requires emergency treatment
- **Myth** Stroke only strikes the elderly
- **Reality** Stroke can happen to anyone
- **Myth** Stroke happens to the heart
- **Reality** Stroke is a "Brain Attack"
- **Myth** Stroke recovery only happens for a few months following a stroke
- **Reality** Stroke recovery continues throughout life

# Stroke Symptoms include:

- SUDDEN numbness or weakness of 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.
- SUDDEN severe headache with no known cause.
- **Call 9-1-1 immediately if you have any of these symptoms**
- **Note the time you experienced your first symptom. This information is important to your healthcare provider and can affect treatment decisions.**

# Act F.A.S.T.

- FACE Ask the person to smile.

Does one side of the face droop?

- A RMS Ask the person to raise both arms.

Does one arm drift downward?

- SPEECH Ask the person to repeat a simple sentence.

Are the words slurred? Can he/she repeat the sentence correctly?

- TIME If the person shows any of these symptoms, time is important.

**Call 911 or get to the hospital fast. Brain cells are dying.**

## Sources:

- [www.nlm.nih.gov](http://www.nlm.nih.gov)
- [www.stroke.org](http://www.stroke.org)