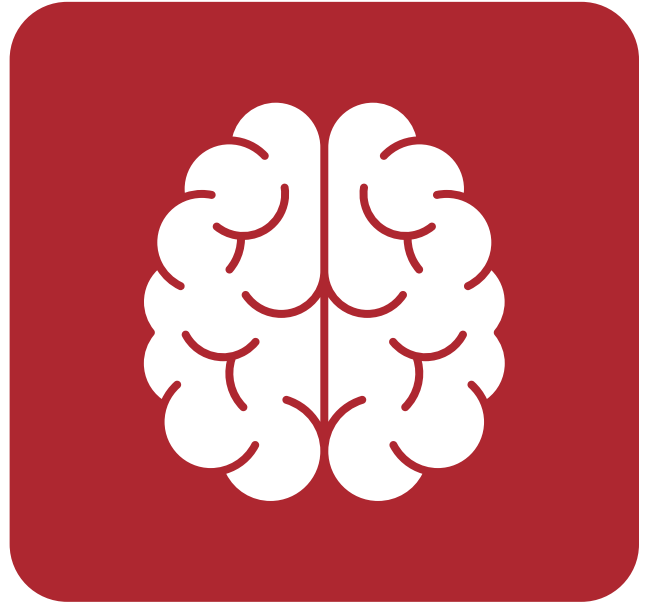


# STAY STROKE SMART: Act F.A.S.T.!

Every year, more than **795,000** people in the United States fall victim to a stroke. And according to the **National Institutes of Health**, aging is the most robust non-modifiable risk factor for incident stroke, which doubles every 10 years after age 55.

The two most common types of strokes are:

1. **Ischemic Stroke** – Occurs when blood supply to the brain is blocked. The lack of blood circulation means there's a decrease in oxygen in the brain tissue. Without oxygen, the brain cells start to die.
2. **Hemorrhagic Stroke** – Occurs when a blood vessel in the brain breaks and causes bleeding. This can lead to pressure and swelling that damages the brain cells.



## Spot the Signs: Think F. A. S. T.

Around **1.9 million brain cells** die every minute a stroke goes untreated. The faster someone experiencing a stroke gets medical help, the higher the survival rate. Use the **F.A.S.T.** method below to determine if someone is having a stroke then call for help immediately.

**Face:** Is one side of the face drooping or numb?

**Arms:** Can they raise both arms above their head, or is one too weak to lift?

**Speech:** Is their speech slurred or strange?

**Time:** If you see any of these warning signs, call 9-1-1 FAST!

According to the **American Stroke Association**, other possible symptoms include:

- Numbness, weakness, or loss of feeling in the face, arm, or leg, especially on one side of the body
- Confusion, difficulty speaking, or unable to understand speech
- Trouble walking, dizziness, loss of balance or coordination
- Severe headache with no known cause

## Hidden Dangers

Several common health conditions increase the chances of having a stroke, but many can be improved with lifestyle changes and medical help. The controllable factors below are the reason for **82% to 90%** of all strokes, according to the National Institutes of Health:

- High blood pressure
- Obesity
- Physical inactivity
- Poor diet
- Smoking

## Staying Stroke-Free

**Healthy lifestyle choices** are at the core of preventing a stroke. Talking with a doctor and fixing bad habits can be the difference between life and death; up to **80% of strokes** can be prevented. The following are ways to fend off a stroke:

- Keeping a healthy weight
- Choosing healthy foods and drinks
- Participating in regular physical activity
- Quit smoking or don't start
- Limiting alcohol consumption
- Maintaining blood pressure
- Controlling cholesterol levels

## Share the Stroke Message

Not only is stroke the **No. 5 cause of death** in the United States, it's also the leading cause of adult disability. Spreading fact-based information on stroke and acting F.A.S.T. can save a life. Visit [stroke.org](http://stroke.org) for more information.

### Transient Ischemic Attack (TIA): Mini but Mighty

A **transient ischemic attack**, also known as a mini-stroke, is a temporary blockage of blood flow to the brain. Unlike full-fledged strokes, a TIA blood clot normally dissolves on its own. Symptoms of a TIA are the same as a normal stroke and typically last less than 5 minutes.

A TIA doesn't cause permanent damage, but it is a warning sign from the body that a stronger, more serious stroke could be on the horizon. It's important to get medical help immediately after a TIA occurs — even after symptoms dissipate — so the body can be assessed.