

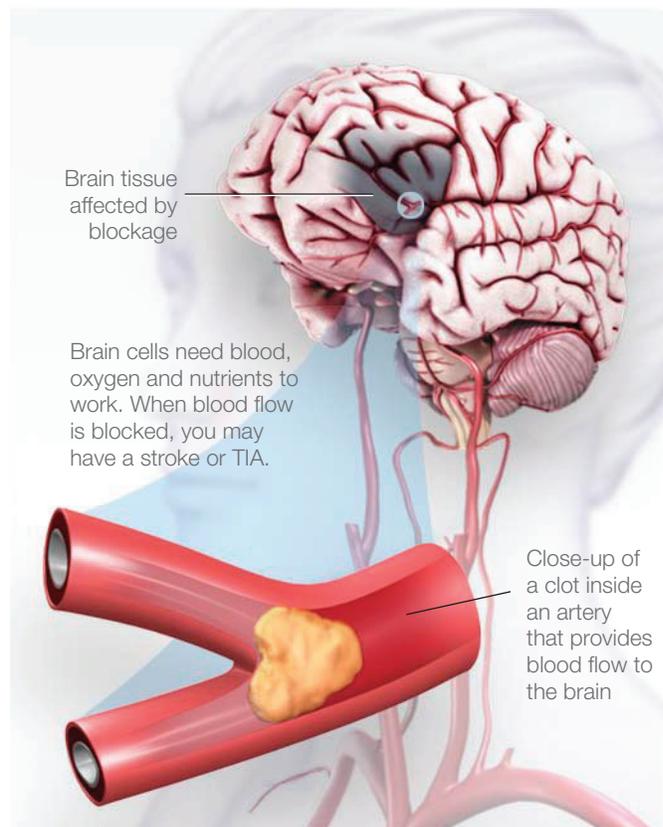


let's talk about

# Stroke, TIA and Warning Signs

Stroke occurs when a blood vessel bringing blood and oxygen to the brain gets blocked or ruptures. When this happens, brain cells don't get the blood that they need. Deprived of oxygen, nerve cells stop working and die within minutes. Then, the part of the body they control can't function either. The effects of stroke may be permanent depending on how many cells are lost, where they are in the brain, and other factors.

***Stroke is the No. 4 cause of death and a leading cause of serious, long-term disability in America.***



## What is a TIA?

TIA, or transient ischemic attack, is a “minor stroke” that occurs when a blood clot blocks an artery for a short time. The symptoms of a TIA are the same as those of a stroke, but they usually last only a few minutes. About 15 percent of major strokes are preceded by TIAs, so **don't ignore a TIA. Call 9-1-1 or seek emergency medical attention immediately!**

## Isn't stroke hopeless?

No. Stroke is largely preventable. You can reduce your stroke risk by living a healthy lifestyle — controlling high blood pressure; not smoking; eating a low-fat, low-cholesterol diet; being physically active; maintaining a healthy body weight; managing diabetes; drinking moderately or not at all.

Also, much is being done to fight the effects of stroke. For example, the FDA approved use of the clot-

dissolving drug tissue plasminogen activator (tPA) to treat stroke. This is an advance because tPA can stop a stroke in progress and reduce disability. But to be eligible for tPA, you must seek emergency treatment right away, because it must be given within 4.5 hours after symptoms start, and have a clot-caused stroke.

## What are warning signs of stroke?

You and your family should recognize the warning signs of stroke. You may have some or all of these signs. Note the time when symptoms start and call 9-1-1 or the emergency medical number in your area. Stroke is a medical emergency!

Don't ignore these warning signs, even if they go away. Timing is important. There are treatments that can be considered within 4 1/2 hours of the onset of symptoms.

### Stroke Warning Signs:

- Sudden numbness or weakness of the face, arm or leg,

(continued)



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

Before you need to take emergency action, find out where the emergency entrance is to your nearest hospital. Also, keep a list of emergency phone numbers next to your phone and with you at all times, just in case. Take these steps NOW!



If you think you may be having a stroke, don't hesitate... immediately call 9-1-1 or your emergency response number.

## HOW CAN I LEARN MORE?

- 1** Talk to your doctor, nurse or other healthcare professionals. Ask about other stroke topics.
- 2** Call **1-888-4-STROKE** (1-888-478-7653) or visit us at **StrokeAssociation.org** to learn more about stroke.
- 3** Call the American Stroke Association's "Warmline" at **1-888-4-STROKE** (1-888-478-7653), and:
  - Sign up for *Stroke Connection*, a free magazine for stroke survivors and caregivers.
  - Talk to other stroke survivors and caregivers and find local support groups.

## Do you have questions for the doctor or nurse?

Take a few minutes to write your questions for the next time you see your healthcare provider.

For example:

**Which facility close to me is best equipped to treat me if I am having stroke symptoms?**

**How can I reduce my risk for stroke?**

## My Questions:

We have many other fact sheets to help you make healthier choices to reduce your risk, manage disease or care for a loved one. Visit [strokeassociation.org/letstalkaboutstroke](http://strokeassociation.org/letstalkaboutstroke) to learn more.

**Knowledge is power, so Learn and Live!**