



# Stroke — How Do I Know?

Learn what a stroke looks and feels like

## What is a stroke?

A stroke happens when the brain does not get the blood it needs. Strokes can cause serious brain damage, disability or even death. There are two main ways a stroke can happen:

- a blood vessel in the brain becomes blocked by a blood clot
- a blood vessel in the brain bursts and stops the supply of blood to part of the brain

## Stroke warning signs

- sudden numbness or weakness of the face, arm or leg, especially when it happens on just one side of the body
- sudden confusion, trouble speaking or trouble understanding
- sudden trouble seeing in one or both eyes
- sudden trouble walking, dizziness or loss of balance or coordination
- sudden severe headache with no known cause

## Risk factors for stroke

A risk is something that increases your chance of having a stroke.

Common risk factors are:

### **High blood pressure. Treat it!**

Change your habits: eat a balanced diet, maintain a healthy weight, and increase your physical activity to reduce blood pressure. If needed, take medicine as your doctor advises to control your high blood pressure.

### **Heart disease. Manage it!**

Change and maintain the heart healthy habits listed above for high blood pressure. Take medicines as your doctor advises to prevent the formation of clots, which can travel to the brain and cause strokes.

### **Diabetes or a problem with blood sugar. Control it!**

Change and maintain the heart healthy habits listed above for high blood pressure. Taking insulin or other medicines as your doctor advises can delay complications (medical problems) that increase the risk of stroke.

### **Use of Tobacco. Quit!**

Medical treatment is available to help you quit.

**DON'T WAIT!**

**If you think someone might be having a stroke, call 9-1-1 right away!**

**CAN'T REPEAT A SENTENCE**

**CAN'T SMILE**

**CAN'T LIFT BOTH ARMS**

