



STROKE

According to the National Stroke Association, approximately 795,000 Americans have a stroke each year. Stroke is the number three killer in the U.S. and the leading cause of disability among adults ⁽¹⁾.

There are two types of stroke: *ischemic* and *hemorrhagic* stroke. *Ischemic* strokes occur when arteries become blocked by blood clots because of the buildup of plaque; almost 87% of strokes are ischemic. *Hemorrhagic* strokes account for 13% of all strokes and occur when a blood vessel in the brain ruptures, causing bleeding into and around the brain ⁽¹⁾.

When a stroke occurs, blood flow is cut off to a portion of the brain and that portion does not receive enough oxygen. The longer the blood flow is cut off to the brain, the greater the damage ⁽¹⁾.

Few people recognize the warning signs of stroke. Some common stroke warning signs to look for include ⁽²⁾:

- sudden numbness or weakness of the face, arm or leg (especially on one side of the body)
- confusion, trouble speaking or understanding speech

- sudden trouble seeing in one or both eyes
- difficulty walking, dizziness, loss of balance or coordination
- sudden severe headache with no known cause

An easy test could help you detect the symptoms of a stroke and act **F.A.S.T.** ⁽¹⁾:

F= Face - Ask the person to smile. Does one side of the face droop?

A= Arm - Ask the person to raise both arms. Does one arm drift downward?

S=Speech - Ask the person to repeat a simple sentence. Does the speech sound slurred?

T=Time - If you observe any of these symptoms, it's time to call 911 or seek help immediately.

Making the decision to seek help immediately could save a life or avoid lifelong disability. Thrombolytic (clot dissolving) therapy is safe and effective for ischemic stroke but should be initiated within three hours of onset ⁽²⁾. For more information on stroke, please visit the following web-links:

Stroke Information:

- [Stroke: Patient Information Sheet](#)
- [High Blood Pressure Risk Calculator](#)
- [Blood Pressure Quiz](#)
- [Prevention and Treatment of High Blood Pressure](#)

References:

1. [National Stroke Association](#)
2. [National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke](#)

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