

STROKE AWARENESS FACT SHEET



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What is a stroke?

According to the American Stroke Association, a stroke occurs when a blood vessel that carries oxygen and nutrients to the brain is either blocked by a clot (called an ischemic stroke) or bursts (called a hemorrhagic stroke). When that happens, part of the brain cannot get the blood (and oxygen) it needs, so it starts to die.

Who is at risk?

The American Heart Association believes that there are some risk factors that can be changed and others that cannot:

<i>Can Be Changed</i>	<i>Can't Be Changed</i>
High Blood Pressure	Prior Stroke, TIA, or Heart Attack
Smoking	Age- 55 or over
Alcohol and Drug Abuse	Heredity or Race (African Americans higher risk)
Poor Diet or Obesity	Gender-men more common than women
Other Heart Disease	

What are the signs and symptoms of a stroke?

It is important for one to know the signs of a stroke and to be able to recognize them. Warning signs of a stroke can vary. Someone who has suffered a stroke may experience symptoms such as:

- Severe headache
- Sudden confusion, trouble speaking or understanding
- Inability to walk
- Blurred vision
- Weakness, numbness of the face, arm, leg, especially on one side of the body
- Loss of bowel and bladder control
- Dizziness