



WELLNESS

PHYSICAL • MENTAL • SOCIAL

GEHA



ACT F.A.S.T. TO AVOID STROKE

Learn the risks, signs and symptoms of stroke – more than 80% are preventable.



Sometimes called a brain attack, stroke causes brain tissue to die leading to brain damage, disability or death. It's the fifth leading cause of death in the country and the leading cause of serious long-term disability.

If you think you or anyone you're with may be having a stroke, **call 9-1-1 immediately**. Getting treatment quickly can save a life – and greatly improve the chances of recovery.

REMEMBER TO ACT F.A.S.T.

How can you tell if you or someone you're with may be having a stroke? Remember the acronym F.A.S.T.:

F = Face drooping: Ask the person to smile. Does one side droop?

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

S = Speech difficulty: Ask the person to repeat a simple sentence. Are the words slurred?

T = Time to call 9-1-1: If the person shows any of these signs, call 9-1-1 immediately

Additional symptoms might include sudden numbness, confusion, severe headache and trouble seeing or walking.

The most successful treatments for stroke are available within a tight timeline, so record the time symptoms started. Do not delay and do not drive yourself or have someone else drive you to the hospital. Treatment for stroke can begin in the ambulance.

CONTROL AND IMPROVE YOUR RISK FACTORS

Some risk factors are out of your control. These include:

- **Age** – People over age 65 are at greater risk.
- **Gender** – Women have a higher risk than men.
- **Race** – African Americans and Hispanics are at higher risk than other groups.
- **Heredity** – A family history of stroke also increases risk.

But about 80% of strokes are preventable. There are many ways to help prevent a stroke by knowing some common risk factors, especially those within your control:

- **High blood pressure** – This is one of the leading causes of stroke but you can work to control your blood pressure. Be sure to know your numbers, which will help you improve your blood pressure.
- **Smoking** – The nicotine and carbon monoxide in cigarette smoke damage the cardiovascular system and increase the risk of stroke. Don't start smoking and if you already do, work to quit.
- **Obesity** – Diets high in saturated fat, trans fat and cholesterol can raise blood cholesterol levels. Diets high in sodium can increase blood pressure. Both are leading risk factors for stroke. But a diet containing just five or more servings of fruits and vegetables each day may reduce the risk of stroke.
- **Physical inactivity** – Lack of exercise can increase your risk of stroke and heart disease and contribute to other risk factors. Aim for being active at least 150 minutes a week, but at the very least just try to move more and sit less.

Explore more at the [Chiefs Wellness Program homepage](#) -->