

Stroke

in Missouri

What is stroke?

A stroke occurs when blood flow to the brain is interrupted. During a stroke, brain cells in the immediate area begin to die because they stop getting the oxygen and nutrients they need to function.

The impact of a stroke can range from mild to severe and can affect your speech, movement and memory.

Who is at risk?

High blood pressure is the leading risk factor for stroke. Other risk factors include:

- Smoking
- High cholesterol
- Diabetes
- Lack of physical activity
- Poor nutrition
- Overweight and obesity

Determine your risk by utilizing the American Heart Association risk calculator at www.heart.org/gglRisk/main_en_US.html.

Reducing your risk

You can do a number of things to reduce your risk for stroke:

- Work with your health care provider to keep your blood pressure, cholesterol and diabetes under control.
- Don't smoke.
- Be physically active for 30 minutes or more on most days of the week.
- Eat a healthy diet to maintain a healthy weight. Reduce the amount of fat in your diet, and be sure to eat plenty of fruits and vegetables.



Stroke warning signs!

Major advances in stroke treatment have made it more important than ever to seek treatment quickly.

To recognize the signs of a stroke, think FAST:

- **F**ace numbness or weakness, especially on one side
- **A**rm numbness or weakness, especially only on one side of the body
- **S**peech slurred or difficulty in speaking understanding or sudden confusion
- **T**ime to call 911 - especially if accompanied by a sudden loss of vision, loss of balance with dizziness or severe headache

If you or someone you know is experiencing stroke symptoms, time is critical. Quick treatment is vital to preventing brain damage and saving lives.

More information can be found at:
health.mo.gov/stroke

