

Stroke Family Support Network

1-888-4STROKE

www.strokeassociation.org

This is an outreach program of the American Stroke Association.

The Stroke Family “Warmline” (1-888-4STROKE) is supported by stroke survivors and/ or caregivers who provide support and helpful information to stroke survivors and their families.

Stroke Connection Magazine, is a helpful resource for stroke survivors and caregivers. People can subscribe to the magazine by calling the Warmline or accessing the Stroke Association’s website.

Support Groups can be located by contacting your local hospital, Infoline or the American Stroke Association’s Warmline.

Infoline

Dial 2-1-1

www.infoline.org

Stroke Coordinators of Connecticut

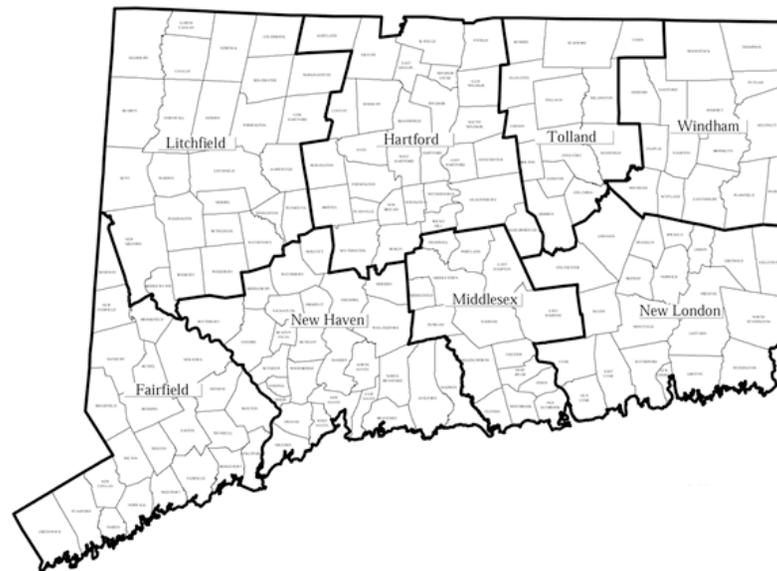


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Learn and Live®

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Stroke / TIA

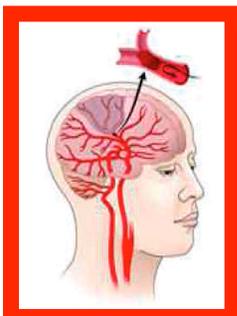


**Building healthier lives,
free of cardiovascular diseases and stroke
for Connecticut Residents.**

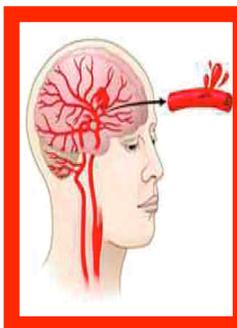
**Learn to recognize a stroke.
Because time lost is brain lost.**

What is a Stroke?

A stroke happens when not enough blood can get to the brain. There are two types of stroke. First type is from a blood vessel being blocked. This is called an ischemic stroke. The second type is where a blood vessel is broken. This is called a hemorrhagic stroke. Both types of strokes can lead to symptoms. Symptoms can be weakness in the body, difficulty speaking and problems seeing. A person can have all or some of these symptoms.



Not enough blood in brain
(Ischemic Stroke)
A blood clot blocks the
blood vessel. This stops the
blood from flowing to the
brain



Bleed in Brain
(Hemorrhagic Stroke)
Weak or unhealthy blood
vessels can break. This can
cause blood to leak out.
The blood then can't flow
to the brain.

People who have had a stroke can have another one. Things that can give you a stroke are called risk factors. You should know what your risk factors are. This will help you avoid having a stroke. You can learn about this by reading this booklet. Please ask your nurse or doctor if you have any questions.

Did you know...

- ❖ Every year around 795,000 people have a stroke.
- ❖ Almost every 40 seconds someone in the United States has a stroke.
- ❖ Someone who had a "mini-stroke" is more likely to have a real stroke.
- ❖ People who smoke are two times more likely to have an ischemic stroke.
- ❖ Hispanics that only speak Spanish are least likely to know the stroke symptoms.

The good news...

You can still be healthy even after a stroke. Being healthy can help you avoid strokes and heart attacks. Here is how:

- ❖ Don't smoke.
- ❖ Eat healthy.
- ❖ Exercise.
- ❖ Take your medicines.
- ❖ Get your blood pressure checked.
- ❖ Keep blood pressure under control.
- ❖ Stay at a healthy weight.
- ❖ Do not get stressed.
- ❖ Get support when you need it.
- ❖ Have regular medical checkups.

What to do after you leave the hospital:

- ❖ Take all your medications as directed. This can help avoid another stroke. Don't change anything with these medications until you see a doctor.
- ❖ The medications are going to help so you don't get another stroke.
- ❖ Never stop taking your medications without talking to your doctor.
- ❖ You must go see your doctor after you leave the hospital. Your doctor will check you and your medications.
- ❖ Always bring your list of medications.
- ❖ Your doctor can also help you get other care that you might need.
- ❖ Call 911 if you start having stroke symptoms!



Risk factors that you can't change:

- ❖ Age
 - People of any age can have a stroke. But older people are more likely to have a stroke. After the age of 55, the chance of having a stroke goes.
- ❖ Man or Woman
 - Younger men are more likely to have a stroke than younger women. But at older age, men and women are at the same risk. And about 55,000 more women than men have a stroke every year. Women have a higher risk of stroke if:
 - 1) They take birth control pills AND
 - 2) Have other risk factors such as: high blood pressure, migraines or a history of smoking.
- ❖ Family History and Race
 - You have more chance of having a stroke if:
 - They run in your family (mother or father).
 - You are Black.
 - You are Hispanic.
- ❖ History of Stroke
 - You are more likely to have a stroke if you had one before. This is why you must make changes to your life. These changes can help you avoid another stroke.



Risk factors you can change:

❖ **High Blood Pressure (Hypertension)**

- High blood pressure is the most common cause of a stroke. It is the most important thing to control. You can have high blood pressure if you have a family history or are too heavy.
- Other things that can cause high blood pressure and stroke:
 - Eating salty foods
 - Smoking
 - Not exercising
 - Stress

❖ **High Blood Sugar (Diabetes)**

- High blood sugar increases your chances of having a stroke. High sugar in the blood can change the walls of the blood vessels in the brain. That causes the blood vessels to clot or leak.

❖ **Tight Neck Vessels (Carotid Artery Disease)**

- The blood vessels in your neck are called carotid arteries. They supply most of the blood to your brain. Fat or cholesterol can buildup in these vessels. This can block the blood from flowing to the brain. This can lead to a stroke.

❖ **Irregular Heart Beat (Atrial Fibrillation/A-Fib) or Other Heart Disease**

- A-fib can cause the heart to pump abnormally. A clot can form in the heart when it does not pump correctly. This clot can then flow up to the brain through the blood vessels and block an artery in the brain. This can then lead to a stroke. Other types of heart disease can also increase the risk of stroke.

❖ **Blood Diseases**

- Check your risk for stroke with your doctor. If you have a blood disease, you may be at risk for a stroke.

❖ **Cigarettes**

- Cigarettes and other tobacco use can damage the blood vessels. This can also cause a stroke.



❖ **Mini-stroke (Transient Ischemic Attack or TIA)**

- A TIA is a “warning stroke” or a “mini stroke”. It can look like a stroke. But these symptoms will only last minutes or hours. There is no permanent damage to the brain. About 30% of people who have a mini-stroke have a stroke within a year. So it is important to go to the hospital for a mini-stroke. That way, you can avoid having a stroke.

❖ **High Cholesterol (Hypercholesterolemia)**

- Too much cholesterol can cause fat to buildup in your blood vessels. This buildup can block blood vessels. The blocked blood vessels can lead to a stroke. Ask your doctor to check your cholesterol.

❖ **Not Exercising or Heavy Body Weight**

- Both of these things can cause you to have heart disease or stroke.

❖ **Too Much Alcohol and Illegal Drugs**

- Drinking too much is bad. Too much alcohol is more than one drink a day for women. For men, it is less than two drinks a day. Too much alcohol can lead to high blood pressure. Drinking a lot at one time can also lead to a stroke. Shooting drugs can also increase risk of stroke. Cocaine can also damage your heart and give you a stroke.