



SENIOR HEALTH

Stroke

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

TYPES OF STROKES

Hemorrhage

Without warning, a blood vessel in the brain bursts. The resulting pool of blood can damage immediate brain tissue or spread to surrounding tissue, causing further problems with body function. This kind of stroke is usually a result of high blood pressure.

Embolism

A blood clot, formed in any part of the body, including the heart, blocks blood flow to the brain. People who experience this type of stroke, have a very high chance of suffering another stroke. Heart conditions, infected heart valves or hardening of the arteries are contributing conditions.

Transient Ischemic Attack (TIA)

A “small stroke,” or TIA, shows stroke symptoms, but the effects disappear in less than 24 hours. This occurs most often when the blood vessels have become narrowed due to hardening of the arteries. TIAs are warning signs. A person who suffers a TIA is likely to have a major stroke within five years.

SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS OF STROKE

numbness or weakness in the face, arm or leg

eye problems, including temporary loss of sight in one eye or double vision

dizziness

drooping facial muscles

difficulty swallowing

paralysis on one side of the body

slurred or lost speech

absent-mindedness or temporary loss of memory or mental ability

recent onset of severe headaches

HOW TO REDUCE YOUR RISK

Some stroke risk factors, such as age, race, diabetes and heredity, can't be controlled, but others can be eliminated by the following simple lifestyle changes:

- Quit smoking.
- Get treatment for high blood pressure.
- If you have high blood cholesterol, talk to your doctor about how to lower it.
- Lose excess weight.
- Exercise regularly.
- Avoid excessive consumption of alcoholic beverages.
- Eat a diet low in fat, cholesterol, sodium and calories.