

Join the fight against stroke

Fact sheet



strokefoundation

Stroke Facts

- In Australia, stroke is the second biggest cause of death and a leading cause of disability.
- In Australia there are 60,000 strokes each year.
- One in six people will have a stroke in their lifetime.
- A stroke occurs every 10 minutes.
- Stroke kills more women than breast cancer and more men than prostate cancer.
- About 20 percent of strokes happen to people under the age of 55.
- Most of those people will require hospital care and more than one-third of those admitted to hospital will move to rehabilitation services after acute care.
- An estimated 350,000 people are living with stroke in Australia. Not only is each of these individuals affected by their stroke, their families and carers also have to deal with the consequences.

What is a stroke?

- A stroke is the way we describe the blood supply to the brain being suddenly cut off.
- Blood travels to the brain in blood vessels, called arteries.
- This can happen in two ways: Blood can stop moving through the artery when it gets blocked by a clot - or when the artery bursts.
- Brain cells can quickly die without the oxygen that the blood supplies.
- This is why it is so important to get to hospital immediately if you think you are having a stroke because it is possible there may be some cells that can survive if you are treated quickly.

How does it affect people?

- Because the brain controls everything we do - the way we think, move, speak, eat – stroke can leave people with a wide range of physical and cognitive changes and disabilities.
- Some of the effects can include paralysis, speech and swallowing difficulties, problems with memory, hearing and eyesight – it all depends on where in the brain the stroke occurs and how severe it is.

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Who is at risk?

- Men or women – stroke can happen to anyone – it does not discriminate.
- Age group – risk factors increase with age but stroke occurs at all ages.

What are some of the causes of stroke?

- There are many causes or risk factors, some are controllable and some are less so.
- Some of the causes within our control include high blood pressure, a family history of stroke, being overweight, smoking, high cholesterol, a high intake of alcohol and diabetes
- TIA, or mini-stroke, is also an indicator of a future stroke so it's important to know what it is and seek help immediately.

What are the signs of an impending stroke?

We have an easy way for everyone to recognise the signs of stroke: FAST

- Face – has the person's face drooped?
- Arms – can the person raise both arms?
- Speech – is their speech slurred?
- Time – call 000 immediately.

How can stroke be prevented?

Eat well, keep a healthy weight, don't smoke, keep blood pressure down, exercise regularly, and keep alcohol consumption to a minimum.



fight stroke

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