

# STROKE

## Prevention and Recovery

A stroke occurs when a blood vessel in the brain is blocked or bursts. This can kill parts of the brain by cutting off blood and oxygen. The parts of the body that are controlled by the damaged area of the brain often never work properly again.

### Know the Symptoms

When a stroke occurs, brain damage can begin within minutes. Quick treatment may be the largest factor regarding how well one recovers.

Symptoms of a stroke include:

- ◆ Sudden numbness, tingling, weakness or loss of movement in the face, arm, or leg, especially on only one side of your body
- ◆ Sudden vision changes
- ◆ Sudden trouble speaking
- ◆ Sudden confusion or trouble understanding simple statements
- ◆ Sudden problems with walking or balance
- ◆ A sudden, severe headache that is different from past headaches

See a doctor for any signs of a stroke, even if they go away. This can sometimes be a result of a transient ischemic attack (TIA) or mini-stroke and is a warning sign that a stroke may happen soon. Getting early treatment can prevent a stroke.



### Risk Factors

Known risk factors include high blood pressure (hypertension), atrial fibrillation, diabetes, smoking, high cholesterol, heavy use of alcohol, being overweight, physical inactivity, age (risk increases with age), race (African Americans, Native Americans, and Alaskan Natives have an increased risk), gender (women have a higher risk) and family history.

### Diagnosis

A CT Scan of the brain will reveal what kind of stroke has occurred and if brain damage has resulted.

### Treatment

Once the condition is stable, treatment focuses on preventing other complications and future strokes. Medications and surgery may be a necessary part of treatment. Rehab and home care may be needed.

### Lifestyle Changes

- ◆ Manage high blood pressure and cholesterol
- ◆ Take medication as prescribed
- ◆ Limit alcohol
- ◆ Exercise
- ◆ Manage diabetes
- ◆ Do not smoke
- ◆ Maintain a healthy weight
- ◆ Eat heart-healthy foods

To download a Stroke Scorecard visit [www.PeninsulaHomeCare.com](http://www.PeninsulaHomeCare.com).



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