Stroke 2 Advice

What is a Stroke



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What is a Stroke?

Every **two hours** someone in **Northern Ireland** has a **stroke**, that's about **4,000** strokes **a year**.

A **stroke** happens when the **blood supply** to part of the **brain** is **interrupted** in some way.

If **brain cells** lose their supply of **oxygen** from the **blood**, they will be **damaged** or will die.

The **symptoms** of a stroke depend on the **part** of the **brain affected** and the extent of the **damage**.

So **no** two **strokes** are the **same** and **recovery** is **different** from person to person.



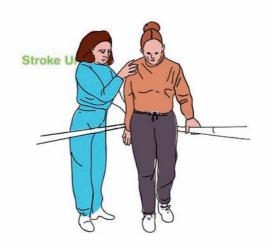


How does a Stroke Happen?

Most **strokes occur** when a **blood clot blocks** one of the **arteries** which carry blood to the brain.

This **type** of **stroke** is referred to as an **ischaemic** stroke, meaning there is **not enough** flow of **blood** to the **brain**.

The **blood clot** can either originate in one of the main **arteries** leading to the **brain**, or develop elsewhere in the body and get transported to the brain in the bloodstream.



Some **strokes** are caused by **bleeding** within or around the **brain** from a **burst blood vessel**.

This type of stroke is called a **haemorrhagic** stroke, haemorrhage is the **medical term** for **bleeding**.

In an **intracerebral haemorrhage**, the **bleeding** occurs **inside** the **brain** itself.

A **subarachnoid haemorrhage** is when a burst **blood** vessel bleeds into the **space** surrounding the **brain**.

The **blood presses** on the brain, **damaging** its delicate tissue. Meanwhile, other **brain cells** are starved of blood and are **damaged**.



What are the Symptoms of a Stroke?

The **symptoms** of a stroke usually **come** on **suddenly**, and can include:

- Weakness and numbness of the face, arm or leg usually on one side of the body
- Problems with balance and coordination
- Communication problems in talking or understanding what others are saying
- Difficulty swallowing
- Sudden blurred vision or loss of sight
- Severe headache



What is a Transient Ischaemic Attack?

A transient ischaemic attack (TIA) or 'mini-stroke' is a set of symptoms similar to those of a stroke but that last a short time and occur because of a temporary lack of blood to part of the brain.

It can last from a **few minutes** to a **few hours** but **symptoms** completely **disappear** within **24 hours**.

A **TIA** may not cause any serious illness. But it can be a **warning sign** of a more serious **stroke** and always **requires** immediate and further **medical attention**.





Act FAST

A stroke is a medical **EMERGENCY**. If you see the signs of a stroke act quickly and **call 999**. Early treatment saves lives and increases the chance of making a better recovery.

Northern Ireland Chest Heart & Stroke supports the FAST campaign.

Facial weakness Can the person smile?

Has their mouth or eye drooped?

Arm weakness Can the person raise both arms?

Is one arm weak?

Speech problems Can the person speak clearly and

understand what you say?

Time to call **999** If the person has failed **any** of

these tests call 999 immediately.

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