What is Stroke?

Learn more about how to prevent, recognize, and manage stroke!

DC | HEALTH
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A stroke happens when the blood flow to part of the brain is blocked or a blood vessel in the brain bursts. This can cause brain cells to die within minutes and may lead to long-term disability or death if not treated quickly. Stroke is a medical emergency, but it can often be prevented.

How to Know If I'm at Risk:

Certain factors increase your risk of having a stroke:

- Having high blood pressure (the #1 cause of stroke)
- Smoking or drinking too much alcohol
- Being overweight or physically inactive
- Having a family history of stroke or heart disease
- Being 55 or older, especially if you are African American

Recognize the Warning Signs of Stroke

How Can Stroke Be Prevented?

- Control your blood pressure, it's the most important step!
- Eat a diet low in salt and saturated fats
- Be physically active—30 minutes a day, most days
- Avoid smoking and reduce alcohol use
- Talk with your doctor about your risk
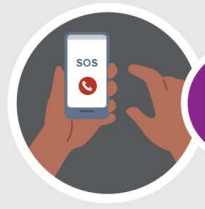
B Balance loss

E Eyesight changes

F Face drooping

A Arm weakness

S Speech difficulty

T Time to call 911

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How Can Stroke Be Managed or Treated?

- Take medications as prescribed for blood pressure, cholesterol, or blood thinners
- Follow a stroke recovery plan with your doctor or specialist
- Attend rehabilitation therapy to regain skills and mobility
- Stay active, eat well, and avoid tobacco
- Monitor your risk factors regularly

For tips and resources to help you build and maintain healthy habits, you can:

» **LivingWell DC:** Visit livingwell.dc.gov/page/go-go-dc for tools to help you eat healthy, exercise, get healthy sleep, go to the doctor, and quit smoking.

» **DC QuitNow:** DC Quit Now offers no-cost programs, medications, and tips from former DC smokers that can help you stay tobacco-free. Call **1-800-QUIT-NOW** or visit https://dcquitnow.org/

» **DC Fire and EMS Department:** Visit any DC fire station for blood pressure monitoring fems.dc.gov/service/blood-pressure-program

» **LinkUDMV:** Find free and low-cost blood pressure self-monitoring programs on linkudmv.org by searching for "blood pressure".

» **Learn How to Build Healthy Habits:** DC SNAP-Ed offers free nutrition and physical activity classes. To find a class, visit the Event Calendar on at livingwell.dc.gov/events or email **info.snap-ed@dc.gov**.

» **DPR:** Explore fitness programs for all levels through the DC Department of Parks and Recreation: dprprograms.splashthat.com

» **How to Manage High Blood Pressure:** Learn more about your blood pressure numbers and how to manage high blood pressure at heart.org/en/

» **Stress Management:** learn easy tips to manage stress at heart.org/en/healthy-living/healthy-lifestyle/stress-management

» **Stroke:** Learn how to recognize and respond to stroke signs: stroke.org

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